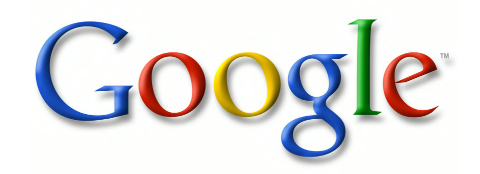
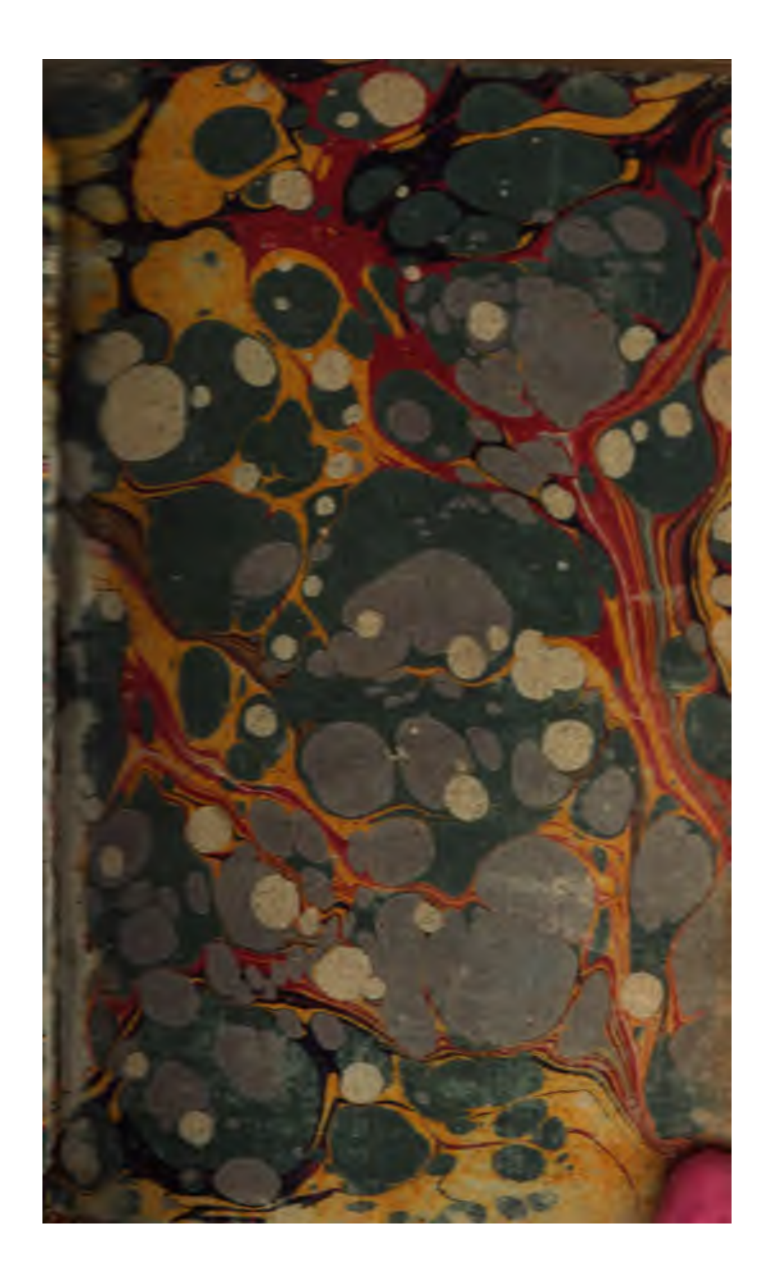
















Thomas Nixon

presented by the Author,

Cabendon Neake



Thomas Nixon

presented by the Author

Capendon Drake

JULIA DE GRAMONT.

VOL. II.

JULIA DE GRAMONT.

LEONORA, by every art of winning gentleneſs and ſtudious love, endeavoured to reſtore his long-loſt happineſs to her Auguſtus, who gratefully received each mark of her affection, and returned them by the moſt delicate attention to her wiſhes. He endeavoured to conceal his inquietude with the ſmiles of content; and baniſhed to

the ſecret receſſes of his heart the unextinguiſhed embers of his fatal paſſion.

The Baron de Neuville felt for him a tenderneſs little inferior to parental ſentiments; and, unable to part with his darling Leonora, prevailed upon the Chevalier to promiſe a conſtant reſidence with him.

Several weeks had paſſed on in a ſcene of tranquillity, uninterrupted, when a courier from the Caſtle de Soiſſons brought a moſt alarming ſummons to the Chevalier. A diſorder had attacked the Marquis, which, although its firſt ſymptoms had threatened no danger, yet had, in the courſe of a few

days,

days, reduced him to the brink of the grave; and, being ſenſible of his approaching end, he wiſhed to embrace Auguſtus once more before his eyes were cloſed for ever. What were the emotions of this amiable ſon! the thought of loſing ſo invaluable a parent deeply touched his ſuſceptible heart; and he delayed not a moment to obey the call of nature and of duty. Leonora, ſharing the anguiſh of her lord, diſſolved in tears, embraced her father, who reluctantly ſubmitted to her accompanying the Chevalier on his mournful expedition.

They were met at the entrance of the Caſtle de Soiſſons by Ma-

dame de Tourville: her eyes were ſwollen with weeping. Upon the Chevalier's fearfully inquiring after the Marquis, "Alas!" replied ſhe, "we muſt loſe your admirable fa-"ther! the hand of death is on "him: exert your utmoſt forti-"tude to ſupport his laſt farewell. "Convinced of his inevitable fate, "but calm and recollected, he is "anxious to beſtow on you his pa-"rental bleſſing. Your brothers "too are ſent for to receive his "generous pardon."

The ſenſibility of Auguſtus was too deeply affected to interrupt Madame de Tourville: he ſunk in a window-ſeat, and yielded for ſome moments to the heart-rending anguiſh of filial regret and tender-neſs.

neſs. An old grey-headed domeſtic, who was the Marquis's principal attendant, approached the Chevalier. The trace of ſorrow marked his venerable countenance; unable to articulate, he bowed in ſilence; and, pointing to the door that led to his maſter's apartment, made ſigns to ſignify that he was expected there. Auguſtus aroſe, and, following his ſpeechleſs guide, ſlowly advanced towards the awful chamber of impending death. Du Bois gently opened a door, and, preceding his ſteps, conducted him through the anti-room to that of this dying and lamented parent.

With what acute emotions was Auguſtus penetrated! The Mar-

quis, pale and emaciated, lay extended on a couch, for which he had exchanged his reftlefs bed. The pillows beneath him were fupported by the moft expreffive figure of genuine woe, in the form of Julia!—her head reclined to reft the cheek of her expiring lord; and, animated alone by the pearly dew of fenfibility, her countenance might have been miftaken for the lifelefs reprefentation of forrow in monumental marble.

The audible fobs of his afflicted fon attracted the notice of this departing parent. He raifed his clofing eyes; he fixed them benignly on the Chevalier, and extended one feeble hand to draw him

to

to his embrace—" Oh, my excel-
" lent child!" he faintly uttered,
" thou art come! and I ſhall die
" content. I have offered up my
" humble prayer for a ſufficient in-
" terval of life and ſenſes to fold
" thee to my heart, and to bleſs thee
" for the unremitted teſtimonies of
" thy filial duty!"—He paufed,
and ſeemed labouring to diſcloſe
ſome important truth! The Che-
valier, oppreſſed with the force of
ſorrow, could only anſwer with
his tears, which bedewed the hand
he gently clafped in his.

The Marquis at length reſumed,
" Thy brothers!—but, alas! they
" have no claim to that endearing
" name; nor blood nor friendſhip

 " have

"have allied them to thee! — for, "oh! my beloved Auguſtus! in "this awful moment, when fate "is going to ſeparate us for ever! — "though repugnant to my feel- "ings, I find myſelf impelled to "confeſs, in mitigation of thy "tender grief,—that, in regretting "my loſs, thou wilt mourn a "friend, but not a father!" — "Ah, Sir!"—exclaimed the Che- valier — "what is it I hear! — "vainly wouldeſt thou attempt to "deceive the ſtrongeſt ties of na- "ture! — my heart cannot diſown "thee as a father! — I feel I am "thy ſon!—caſt me not off—diſ- "claim me not — oh, my reſpect- "able parent!"

"Thou

"Thou art my ſon!" returned the Marquis (ſtrongly moved)—"my dear, my adopted ſon! but, "alas!—thy birth was not derived "from me!—Heaven bleſſed me "not with ſuch a ſon!—oh, that "it had! and that my name and "honours might have legally de-"ſcended to merit ſo approved! "but I have ſecured thy virtues "beyond the reach of envy and "revenge—I am enabled, without "injuſtice to my ſucceſſors, to be-"queath thee a portion ſufficient "to ſupport the rank in which "thou haſt been educated—mayeſt "thou live long, reſpected and "beloved!—and may that power "ſupreme, who ſummons me from

"hence,

"hence, guard thee from ill, and "crown with uninterrupted happi- "neſs thy nuptial ſtate!

"The Marchioneſs — that beſt "of women and of wives — is "my ſole executrix — aſſiſted by "the Count de Senanges, ſhe "will do thee every juſtice. — "In this paper," drawing a pacquet from his boſom, "thou "wilt find the ſtory which con- "cerns thy birth — neither time "nor ſtrength will allow me to "enter myſelf upon ſo intereſting "a detail — commend me to thy "Leonora, and ſhare with her my "warmeſt bleſſings!"

At this moment the ſolemn ſcene was ſuddenly interrupted by the entrance of the phyſicians who attended

tended the Marquis.—During the time that the aſtoniſhed Chevalier was liſtening to a recital which deprived him of a parent, various were the emotions of Julia!—inadvertently, for one inſtant, her eyes met thoſe of him to whom ſhe was no longer mother!—and, for one intoxicating moment, the ecſtaſy of that thought overcame even the force of grief itſelf, and rendered them inſenſible to any other idea!—but the attention of the Marchioneſs to her dying lord, and thoſe of Auguſtus to his generous benefactor, ſoon triumphed over this involuntary reflection. Exhauſted with the exertion his ſpirits had undergone, the Marquis felt the hour of

of fate approaching—he took a tender and affecting leave of his beloved Julia, who was supported senseless from the scene of death!—This amiable man, who, in his days of health, had arranged every worldly circumstance, now raised all his pious thoughts from earth to heaven!—he requested the surrounding mourners to disperse, and to leave him during the last important moment with his confessor, in whose reverend arms he yielded up his guiltless soul without a sigh!

When this fatal event was known throughout the castle, an awful mute dejection reigned in every heart and countenance!—As the Marquis had lived beloved, so he died

ed lamented !—Madame de Tourville and Leonora tenderly watched over the Marchioneſs, who felt all the force of undiſſembled ſorrow for a huſband who had attached her to him by every grateful ſentiment.

About an hour after the cloſing ſcene, the new Marquis, with his brother and the bride of the former, made their public entry into the caſtle; their filial lamentations were but the mockery of woe — real unconcern was written in legible characters upon each countenance. The Marquis, who expected to be received by the widow of his father with the ſame inſenſibility which compoſed his own

own unfeeling heart, ſent her notice of his arrival, and that of the Marchioneſs de Soiſſons, requeſting her appearance. Shocked at ſuch an embaſſy, and incapable of complying with their ſummons, ſhe entreated Madame de Tourville to deſcend to theſe haughty gueſts, and to inform them that in her preſent ſtate of affliction retirement was her choice; but that her domeſtics ſhould receive commands to pay them every due attention and reſpect during the time they propoſed honouring the caſtle with their preſence.—The proud Marquis reddened at this reply, and ironically ſaid, he was obliged to Madame de Soiſſons for information

tion that himſelf and his family were viſitors in that manſion, ſince he had, till that moment, been ignorant that he was not himſelf the maſter of it — "However," continued he, "the teſtament of the "deceaſed will decide with more "propriety a dubious circumſtance; "tell then this fair inconſolable "that, as her preſence will be ne-"ceſſary at the opening of the will, "I hope ſhe will pay that reſpect "to my father's memory not to "delay the ceremony later than "this evening; ſince his com-"mands, juſt or unjuſt, ought "to be put into immmediate exe-"cution." During this feeling ſpeech his haughty wife ſat lolling in

in a chair with ſullen dignity, without deigning to make the ſlighteſt inclination of the head to Madame de Tourville, though ſhe ſurveyed her minutely with an imperious ſtare: that amiable woman, unabaſhed by a deportment which could only excite her contempt, eyed the Marchioneſs with ſuch a look of perfect indifference, that ſhe appeared ſenſibly mortified at her neglected conſequence — however, ſhe affected ſtill a careleſs air — but the bluſh of wounded pride demonſtrated that malice dictated her addreſs to the Marquis in theſe words — "Oh, my dear lord! "you muſt inſiſt upon obtaining "for me an introduction — I am "abſolutely

" absolutely dying with impa-
" tience, to pay my duty to our
" beauteous mother, and to behold
" those charms which had the
" power to thaw the frozen heart
" of age!—But tell her, Madam,
" if you are honoured with the
" confidence of this widowed fair,
" she must not dim the lustre of
" her eyes with tears — she must
" reserve their beams to conquer
" youthful slaves."

A smile of disdain was all the reply Madame de Tourville made; and she quitted the room in silence just as the worthy ecclesiastic entered, who had so recently closed the eyes of the best of men. A placid serenity, the result of a long

life of piety and devotion, marked his venerable aſpect. He advanced, with unaſſuming dignity, towards the young Marquis, and thus accoſted him: "I come, Sir, to "fulfil the laſt commands of your "expiring father: he charged me "to tranſmit to you that benedic-"tion, and forgiveneſs, which the "ſudden termination of his exiſt-"ence permitted him not perſon-"ally to beſtow, upon yourſelf and "brother."—"For his bleſſing, "reverend father," interrupted the Marquis, "we are obliged, as to "his forgiveneſs, he reaps himſelf "that benefit; it was an act requi-"ſite for a dying Chriſtian, to quit "the world in charity with all

" mankind; nor could he other-
" wiſe have a claim to perfect ab-
" ſolution from his own ſins and
" errors."

" Errors," replied the prieſt,
" are inſeparable from humanity;
" but the virtues of the exalted pat-
" tern we have loſt greatly over-
" balanced thoſe trivial failings,
" which, in a contrary character,
" increaſe with the vices of the
" heart till they, unchecked, be-
" come enormities! — But the ſon
" of ſuch a father ſhould inherit
" his ſhining virtues with his ſplen-
" did patrimony — ſhould purſue
" the bright example of conſpi-
" cuous merit—and, to be as great,
" ſhould learn to be as good!

Sullen rage deformed the vi-ſage of the Marquis.—" And what " art thou," he cried, " who, with " officious zeal and inſolent re-" proaches, preſumeſt to arraign " my conduct, oppoſing to it the " panegyric of a father!—thy falſe " devotion is a cloak for every " crime that offers its temptation; " but never can impoſe on me.— " Away, and know thy reign is " ended—the ear that liſtened to " thy flattering blandiſhments is " cloſed—thy influence is no more; " but that thou art below revenge, " thou ſhouldeſt feel the weight of " my reſentment.—Be gone, and " never let me ſee that hoary face " again."

Unmoved,

Unmoved, the venerable father viewed the headſtrong paſſion of impetuous youth! — he was armed with conſcious rectitude and fearleſs innocence — he ſhook his ſilver head, and, with a countenance of divine compoſure, "I go," ſaid he, "and ſhall not fail to offer up
"my humble prayers, that the all-
"wiſe diſpoſer of the ſons of earth
"may change thy heart—pour his
"enlightening grace upon thee—
"and reſtore thee to thyſelf.—
"Farewell, my ſon!—mayeſt thou,
"ere the night of age creeps on,
"regain the path from which thou
"haſt unfortunately ſtrayed, and,
"ere too late, reform!"

He fixed an expreſſive look of pity on the Marquis, and left him in ſome degree confounded by the calm ſerenity he had failed to exaſperate, and ſecretly aſhamed of his illiberal treatment of a man whoſe blameleſs character and holy function demanded a contrary reception.

The afflicted Chevalier, who mourned the Marquis with all the tenderneſs of filial affection, had retired into his cloſet to vent an unfeigned agony of ſorrow. The peculiar delicacy of his feelings and ſituation would not permit him to appear before the widowed Julia; but he had ſent a reſpectful inquiry after her health, and had the conſolation of hearing that ſhe was recovered

recovered from that ſtate of inſenſibility which had overwhelmed her ſenſes during the laſt awful ſcene.

The grief of the Marchioneſs did not expreſs itſelf in the oſtentatious diſplay of clamorous and artificial woe—it was tender—it was natural—it proceeded from a heart replete with ſenſibility, and warm with gratitude. She mourned, the trueſt friend and the moſt kind protector; and ſhed to his memory the genuine tears of undiſſembled and ſincere regret.

Leonora, who, in compliance with the fervent entreaties of Auguſtus, had left him, though reluctantly, to the private indulgence of his ſorrows, requeſted at length an

interview, with a voice of gentle earneſtneſs. He anſwered not till ſhe named the Marchioneſs, aſſuring him ſhe came charged with her expreſs commands. That ſound was irreſiſtible; the fair petitioner obtained admittance, and urged a a requeſt from Julia, that he would, with Leonora, deſcend to the family party below, who were entitled to the due formalities of reſpect, and who might, in witneſſing their real affliction, attempt to wear the maſk of ſorrow in a houſe where a parent's ſacred remains were ſcarcely cold. Though the Chevalier, from various motives, wiſhed to avoid the preſence of thoſe who had ever envied him, even

even while ſuppoſed allied to him by nature, yet he made a painful effort to obey the Marchioneſs; and the arrival of the Count and Counteſs de Senanges inſpired him with new reſolution, and afforded him a ſenſible conſolation. After the Count had paid a ſhort and affecting viſit to the beauteous relict of his lamented friend, he haſtened to join the diſconſolate Auguſtus. Having both mutually wept the fatal event which occaſioned their preſent mournful meeting, they repaired to the eating hall, where they found this feeling family riſing from table. With cold civility the Marquis received the Count and Chevalier; and, inſtead of condoling with

with them on the death of an invaluable parent, presented, in great formality, his bridal Marchioness; who, elated with her rank, and vain of fancied consequence, haughtily returned their distant salutes. When Leonora made her appearance, Madame de Soissons, with the freedom of conscious superiority, took her hand, and, affecting an air of condescension, thanked heaven that it had at last sent her a companion of her own sex: then, with a vivacity in her look and gesture, which would have better suited the scene of festivity than the house of death, she moved towards the gardens, requesting Leonora to conduct her round

them;

them: —that fair afflicted, whoſe countenance partook of the ſenſibility of her heart, followed the Marchioneſs with reluctant ſteps; and, rather guided than guiding, accompanied her into a parterre, where the depredations of deſtructive autumn ſeemed mournfully to proclaim the dying ſeaſon, and the general loſs.

Leonora was ſo abſorbed by her own reflections, that ſhe had advanced ſome paces before ſhe recollected ſhe was herſelf a total ſtranger at the caſtle of Soiſſons, having, upon the preſent ſad occaſion, made her firſt viſit to its lamented owner. She was juſt going to impart this circumſtance as an

excuſe for quitting the Marchioneſs, when a ſudden ſhower of rain naturally relieved her from her employment. Madame de Soiſſons flew with rapidity to the caſtle, where, having arrived ſome moments before Leonora, ſhe threw open a ſaſh in the ſaloon, and ſtood enjoying, in a burſt of unreſtrained laughter, the inconveniencies her diſtanced companion ſuffered from the ſtorm.

The widowed Marchioneſs, who, from the report of Madame de Tourville, felt an invincible repugnance to admit into her preſence the unworthy ſons of her lamented lord, entreated the Count de Senanges to diſpenſe with her appearance

ance during the ſolemn meeting in the evening, and to excuſe her, under pretence of indiſpoſition, from attending a ceremony which muſt, from many circumſtances, aggravate her affliction, and might probably expoſe her to inſults from thoſe whom ſhe would wiſh to reſpect for the ſake of him who was their father. The Marchioneſs proceeded then, while a momentary bluſh traverſed her languid cheek, to requeſt the Count would make a public declaration before the Marquis, that Auguſtus was an adopted ſon, and that, though he no longer had a claim to the endearing name of brother, yet that the beſt of men and fathers, in re-

garding

garding his virtues with paternal tendernefs, had equally diftinguifhed him in his will. "I know their "envy, I know their malice," continued fhe; "they will attempt to "wound the delicacy of the Che- "valier, by difclaiming all future "connexion with him: — but tell "them, Count, his confequence "canot be derived from their alli- "ance."

As fhe fpoke fhe fixed her fweet and dewy eyes upon the ground, to elude any penetrating look which the amiable Senanges, from a knowledge of her former fentiments, might have caft upon her. The poffeffions of the late Marquis being immenfe, he was empowered to indulge his generofity towards his

his lovely widow, and adopted ſon, without injuſtice to his children. — But, notwithſtanding the wealth which the two brothers inherited, their abject intereſted ſouls reproached, in bitter terms, the memory of a father! Though the chateau de Soiſſons was leſs extenſive and magnificent than the reſt of his numerous houſes, yet his illiberal ſucceſſor openly upbraided the Marchioneſs for permitting her lord to bequeath it to her even for life. Little did he conceive the diſintereſted ſentiments of Julia's ſoul. Having reſolved to paſs the firſt year of her widowhood either with her ſiſter or at a convent, ſhe made a voluntary reſignation of this

this diſputed manſion, which was, with a mean avidity, accepted. She acquainted him, through the Count, that, when every honour due to the memory of the Marquis was performed, it was her intention to retire with the Counteſs de Senanges, and to leave him at liberty to take poſſeſſion of a place which had now no charms for her.

As Julia was determined to depoſit the ſacred remains of her huſband among the monuments of his anceſtors with funereal pomp, her departure was naturally retarded longer than the Marquis wiſhed; but the forms of decency kept his impatience within proper bounds; and the ſatisfaction he felt

in

in his approaching acquiſition, made him conduct himſelf with tolerable decorum: he even checked his Marchioneſs for frequently expreſſing her ennui at the tedious ſolemnity of the mournful ſcenery: the diſmal drapery of death — its gloomy tapers—and its ſilent horrors—were ill adapted to the levity of her diſpoſition. She endeavoured to divert the lingering hours in the ſociety of Leonora, who herſelf began to find affliction irkſome, and to wiſh for an opportunity of partaking in thoſe public amuſements, deſcribed by her new companion in alluring colours.

Though the Marchioneſs at firſt ſight ſeemed devoid of every grace,

and prepoſſeſſed Leonora with no very favourable ſentiments, yet ſhe was ſo far miſtreſs of the wiles of diſſimulation, that where ſhe wiſhed to pleaſe ſhe could be dangerouſly inſinuating: fatally for her young and inexperienced friend, ſhe by imperceptible degrees gained a powerful influence over her mind. Leonora grew weary of offering rejected conſolation to a diſconſolate huſband, who ſhunned her preſence, and, ſeeking ſolitude, left her at liberty to converſe with thoſe who were qualified only to vitiate a weak and inconſiderate heart.

In the apartments of the widowed Marchioneſs there reigned a ſtill ſolemnity, unſuitable to the gaiety

of Leonora: and when, infected by a momentary impulse, she appeared before her new preceptress with a dejected countenance, she was received with ironical smiles, accompanied by an interrogation, whether she was really become the dupe of artificial sorrow—and if she could rationally believe that so young and beautiful a widow was sincere in regretting the dissolution of an union so very unequal? The volatile Leonora gave easy access to these artful insinuations, and began to form a less perfect idea of that character she had hitherto regarded in the highest point of view; nor did she blush to accuse the innocent and virtuous Julia of affecting the parade

of grief, while her heart ſecretly re-joiced at liberty regained. Madame de Senanges, to whoſe friendſhip the ungrateful Leonora owed the hand of Auguſtus, became totally neglected by her: ſhe dreaded her juſt reproaches, and conſciouſly avoided the ſilent cenſures of her awful eyes. Madame de Tourville's ſerious turn of mind (the effect only of her misfortunes) was peculiarly repugnant to Leonora's diſpoſition, and ſhe conſidered her gentle admonitions as the formal precepts of advancing age.—Thus was the artful Marchioneſs the choſen and dangerous companion of her ſocial hours: the Marquis and his brother likewiſe paid her flattering at-

tentions;

tentions; her musical talents rendered her a most agreeable addition to their present contracted circle; and her uncommon beauty captivated the eye, while her soft harmony charmed the ear.

The strange discovery of the dying Marquis had increased the misery of Augustus, and revived the smothered flame of unextinguished love!—He found himself released from one fatal barrier to his hopes, only to shew the remaining obstacle in a still stronger light: while he considered Julia as united to a father, he submitted with some degree of resignation to his fate; but the recent disavowal of that filial tie awakened him to a more poignant

 sense

ſenſe of anguiſh;—from beingin different to Leonora, he began to view her with eyes of averſion, and with a mortifying coldneſs rejected her attentions. So abſorbed was he in the contemplation of his wayward fate, that he was quite regardleſs of the paper to which the Marquis had referred him; and, totally incurious about the circumſtances relative to his birth, he had careleſsly thrown it into a cabinet, where it remained unopened.

Pride had ſome ſhare in this extraordinary negligence. Dreading that obſcure connexions might prove him unworthy of adoring his beloved Julia, and of the hopes to which he had once aſpired, he dared

not

not to dive into the myſtery of his extraction. Madame de Tourville, whoſe friendſhip for Auguſtus was warm and ſincere, would ſometimes rally him on his inattention. At length, tired with her importunities, he one day reſigned the paper into her hands, aſſuring her that his firm reliance on her fidelity gained her this confidence; he concluded by conjuring her that, if ſhe found his birth ignoble, ſhe would be ſilent even to him, and return the manuſcript ſealed up, as ſhe received it; —that, in ſuch a caſe, ignorance was his choice; and, not wiſhing to know the peculiar circumſtances of his diſgrace, he was reſolved to hide in ſome foreign kingdom his

 degraded

degraded head. Madame de Tourville smiled at his eagerness; "Ah! "rest assured," she said, "a haughty "soul like yours is sprung from no-"ble blood." — "If it should be "otherwise," replied he with emo-"tion, as you value my honour and "my peace of mind, inform not the "adored idol of my heart that the "man, who was once distinguished "by her preference, is become an "object unworthy of her!"—"Re-"member," returned Madame de Tourville gravely, "that this idol "of your heart is, or ought to be, "your wife; and she is too tenderly "attached, to suffer birth or ex-"traction to influence her senti-"ments."

"ments." Auguſtus was prevented from making a reply by the entrance of the new Marchioneſs with Leonora; when, having paid ſome cold civilities to them, he withdrew to ruminate upon his extraordinary ſituation. Madame de Tourville retired to her cloſet, where ſhe had cautiouſly depoſited the manuſcript, determined not to examine its contents till after the interment of the Marquis.

The lovely Julia remained conſtantly in her apartment; nor could ſhe be perſuaded to diſſipate her ſorrow by mixing with the family circle: ſhe dreaded, more than ever, encountering the Chevalier. The diſcloſure of his birth yielded her

her a ſecret conſolation; but, while it ſeemed to render her attachment leſs guilty, her delicacy of ſentiment ſuffered her not to admit the moſt diſtant hope of ever being united to Auguſtus.

The evening before the funeral obſequies were to be performed, a melancholy impulſe led her to take a laſt farewell of her lord's cold remains. She found an opportunity, when the Counteſs and Madame de Tourville were abſent, (who ſhe thought might have oppoſed her deſign) to ſteal from her apartment; and, directed by the glimmering tapers which, with ſad ſolemnity, illumined the caſtle, ſhe

approached

approached the awful chamber of eternal ſleep.

Auguſtus, from the ſame ſympathy of grateful affection, at an oppoſite door was entering the room where, encloſed within his laſt habitation, repoſed the lifeleſs Marquis.—The attendants, who perceived the Marchioneſs advance, reſpectfully withdrew into the antichamber.

The Chevalier, with trembling emotion, beheld the beauteous widow move; and, faſcinated to the ſpot, ſtood, transfixed, to gaze upon her more than mortal loveleineſs!—her ſable robe flowed with unſtudied elegance, which added graces to her inimitable form.

As

As she approached the coffin her countenance was awfully distressed: she fixed upon the serene and lifeless features of her lord a look of animated woe; then, melting into tears, she thus addressed him—"Dear, sacred relics of the most "esteemed of men, adieu!—and, "if thy hovering spirit can from "its blest abode look down upon "the unfortunate Julia—let it wit-"ness the sacred vow she breathes. "True to thy honoured, thy re-"spected memory, never shall this "widowed hand—" At that instant the frantic Chevalier, rushing forward, sunk at the feet of the astonished Marchioness.—"Oh, "cruel, faithless Julia!" he exclaimed;

claimed; "is it thus that thou "wouldest keep those vows in- "violate, which promised once to "the despised Augustus ecstatic "happiness!—Ah, since fate no "more imposes, by parental claims, "the reluctant silence of a love "like mine, would that seraphic "tongue pronounce a vow irrevo- "cable!"—"How, Chevalier!" interrupted the Marchioness, freeing herself, with difficulty, from the grasp of her distracted lover, and recoiling precipitately—"is this a "scene—is that an object—for such "unhallowed converse!—and dares "the ungrateful Augustus insult "the sacred silence of that ho-

"noured

"noured corſe with the raſh ve-
"hemence of an impious paſſion!
"—Leave me—fly me—and, in
"the preſence of an injured wife,
"repent thy guilty frenzy!"

She turned from him; and, while the awful dignity of offended virtue beamed in the radiance of her eyes, ſhe darted a glance of ſuch piercing reproof upon the kneeling Chevalier, that he remained on the ground without the power of ſuing her forgiveneſs, or oppoſing her departure.—As ſhe withdrew he gazed after her till ſhe vaniſhed from his ſight.

He then ſuddenly ſtarted up, and exclaimed—"Oh, ſhe is gone!
"and thou, wretched Auguſtus! art
"become,

" become, through thy own un-
" governable folly, the object of
" abhorrence and contempt!—con-
" tempt from Julia!—Ah! thought
" intolerable!—but" (lowering his voice) " let me check these tran-
" sports; complaints are profan-
" ation here." With folded arms he stood for some moments, contemplating the clay-cold Marquis: death had not divested his benign features of the placid smile that animated his living countenance—
" Oh, blest repose!" softly uttered Augustus—" happy state of endless
" peace! — freed from the cares of
" existence, thy faultless soul is
" flown to that land where sorrows
" are no more! — there to receive
" the

" the glorious crown of virtue! —
" while I, thy miserable adopted
" son, am left a prey to wretched-
" ness and scorn!"—He turned away, heaved from the bottom of his heart a sigh profound, and bent his steps to his apartment. When the Marchioness had reached her sofa she sunk upon it, and burst into an agony of tears! — a lover, whom she still adored, recurred to her imagination, kneeling at her feet. Enough had she sacrificed to duty and to honour in the sharp rebuke with which she quitted him — her tenderness revived, and she now became more acutely sensible that the Chevalier was yet possessor of her heart.

"Ah, loved Auguſtus!" ſhe ſoftly exclaimed, "why does thy dear "idea haunt my guilty mind—"why, in this awful hour, when "gratitude demands each tear as "tributes due to a revered, a gene-"rous huſband—why do they flow "for thee?—loſt!—unworthy Ju-"lia!—extract this fatal paſſion "from thy boſom, or die in the at-"tempt!"—The Counteſs de Senanges entered at this period: ſhe had miſſed, and ſought her ſiſter; had traced her to the ſcene of decorated woe, and found her now diſſolved in tears.—"Ah, my Julia!" ſhe cried, "wherefore did you elude "my vigilance to ſeek a ſpot which "offered to your view a ſpectacle

" of ſadneſs!"—Forgive me, oh my " Henrietta," replied the beauteous mourner, — " I ſhall offend your " tenderneſs no more.—I have bade " a long and laſt adieu to him, whoſe " virtues muſt ever ſurvive in my " remembrance—It was a debt in- " cumbent on my gratitude, and " the performance of it has eaſed " me of a weight of care. — To- " morrow he will be borne for- " ever from my ſight, and in the " cold encloſure of a tomb for ages " reſt!"

The ſucceeding day, with mournful ſolemnity, the ſlow proceſſion moved; and the lamented Marquis was depoſited among his anceſtors.

The cries of poverty, the fighs of the afflicted, the groans of the oppreffed, his bounty had relieved, followed to the tomb thefe loved remains! — they mourned their patron, their protector, friend! — His fad domeftics drooped their heads; and, with filent grief, fupported to his grave their much regretted mafter, whofe character was written in the tears of every eye: and his fame refounded by that only enviable panegyric — the fympathetic forrow of each feeling heart! —

The departure of the Marchionefs from the caftle de Soiffons was fixed for the day fucceeding that of the funeral obfequies. The Count de Senanges, whom his

ſiſter had intruſted to examine the private cabinets of the late Marquis, amongſt various trinkets found a ſmall caſket ſealed, and addreſſed to Auguſtus. He inſtantly ſought his friend, and found him walking penſively on the terrace: the Count preſented him with the caſket; — with incurious eyes he viewed it, ſighed, and careleſsly placed it in his boſom. — "Whence comes it, Chevalier," ſaid his friend, "that you diſco-"ver ſo much indifference relative "to your birth?"—"It ariſes," replied he mournfully, "from my "indifference to life: am I not an "outcaſt? reared by the hand of "charity, unconnected with the

"world —

"world — loſt to happineſs — the "victim of deſpair! — I would be "for ever ignorant of an origin "which expoſed to the ſhafts of "fortune a very wretch indeed!" "You are to blame," replied the Count; "whatever may be your "deſcent, reſpectable by educa-"tion, exalted by native worth, "and diſtinguiſhed by fortune — "you owe to the lovely woman "who has united her fate to yours, "as well as to yourſelf, a diſco-"very ſo important." — "Aye, "there's my ſting," returned the Chevalier with a look of diſtraction, "that ſyren has undone me: but "for her, what ecſtatic hopes "might I not now have formed!

"Ah, no; presumptuous wretch! "would thy offered, thy ignoble "hand, have been accepted by that "Julia, whose illustrious birth, "and honourable blood, should "scorn thy vows, and spurn thy "base alliance." He walked a few paces from the Count in the strongest agitation; then approaching him again, and softening his accent—"Forgive, my more than "brother, the wildness of despair: "I cannot be ungrateful to thy "friendship;—if then thy faithful "affection yet finds an interest in "my unfortunate destiny, Madame de Tourville can inform "you all my story: in her hand "I placed the important manu-

"script.—

"script.—Go then, my dear Se-
"nanges, learn from that fatal
"paper a secret of which I would
"be ever ignorant."—The blush of native pride and conscious dignity glowed on his cheek; he hastily turned from the Count, who quitted him to go in pursuit of Madame de Tourville. He found her in the pavilion with Leonora, to whom she had been mildly representing some improprieties in her late conduct, to which she was endeavouring to attribute the sudden coldness and reserve which she complained of in her husband.—
"Your judgment, Madam," said she haughtily, as the Count approached, "is totally indifferent

"to me; I neither ſeek your approbation nor dread your cenſures — I ſtand not in need of your advice to learn the duties of a wife. — Reſt contented with your boaſted influence over the Marchioneſs and Counteſs, nor preſume to comment upon my conduct with ſuch inſulting freedom." She quitted the temple, darting a look of fury upon Madame de Tourville, and of diſdain upon the Count, as ſhe paſſed: ſhe then directed her ſteps to the dreſſing-room of the new Marchioneſs, where they both turned into ridicule the friendly admonitions of the amiable Tourville. That imperious woman had, by flattery and diſſimulation,

lation, gained a perfect aſcendency over Leonora; to vitiate whoſe innocence of manners was her cruel aim, that ſhe might reduce her to a level with herſelf: and ſo devoid was ſhe of each virtuous ſentiment, that ſhe uſed every argument to withdraw her affections from her once loved huſband, maliciouſly urging the deception of his birth as a motive for reſentment.

The brother of the Marquis, now the only Chevalier de Soiſſons, had been ſtruck with the beauty of Leonora; and, diſſolute in his principles, was capable of attempting the heart of her who was united, by the moſt ſolemn vows, to his adopted brother. — Too well he ſucceeded

ſucceeded in the baſe deſign! Leonora, ſtung with the cold indifference of her lord, ſought in the attentions of the Chevalier to forget her wrongs; and found, too late, that Henry de Soiſſons was better formed to charm her affections than the wedded Auguſtus.—The new Marchioneſs was the confidante of the Chevalier; and, envying the fortune bequeathed to Auguſtus, exerciſed her revenge, by the moſt ungenerous attempt to wound his peace and honour in the ſeduction of his wife's affections.—She was hourly painting to Leonora the paſſion and admiration of Henry—at the ſame time artfully reminding her of the neglects

and

and coldneſs of a huſband.—Leonora was endowed with a ſhare of vanity equal to her beauty—it was wounded by indifference—it was flattered by attention.—Henry de Soiſſons was handſome and inſinuating—Leonora poſſeſſed a heart eaſily impreſſed, and naturally inconſtant. She was diſtant from the precepts of a father—the retirement of the Marchioneſs and Counteſs deprived her of their once valued example. At firſt her virtue ſtarted at its danger, but ſhe wanted reſolution to withſtand the allurements of ſighs and proteſtations; and, depending too much on her own power and the innocence of her intentions, ſhe ſuffered herſelf

herſelf to liſten to the ſyren voice of an imprudent love.

When the Count de Senanges found himſelf alone with Madame de Tourville, after having touched, with regret, upon the changed conduct of Leonora, he entered upon the ſubject relative to the myſterious birth of his friend. Madame de Tourville preſenting to him the manuſcript—" It was for this pur-" poſe," ſaid ſhe, " that I retired " hither when I was interrupted by " the fair wife of its hero, and was " induced, from the ſtrong im-" pulſe of friendſhip, to offer ad-" monitions unwelcome to the ear " of youth and beauty.—Since you " have obtained permiſſion to ſhare

" with

" with me the contents of this pa-
" per, let me requeſt you to open
" it and read."—The Count, with agitation, broke the ſeal, and began the following relation.—

THE MANUSCRIPT.

Returning home one evening from a viſit in the vicinity of Verſailles, my carriage ſuddenly ſtopped.—Inquiring into the cauſe, I obſerved one of my attendants holding up an oſier baſket, which he inſpected with ſome ſurpriſe.—I began to interrogate the ſervants; when the plaints of an infant inſtantly informed me what were its contents.—Du Bois drew near, and offered to my view a beauteous boy!—

boy! — it was drest with elegance; and its waist encircled by a rib-band, from which hung a golden coral, ornamented with jewels, and distinguished by the initials of two letters in a cypher. — The bewailings of this little creature — its looks of helpless innocence — affected me with compassion and tenderness. — I took it in my arms, determined to be its protector till I could restore it to those of a parent, who seemed to have exposed it to receive, from the benevolence of strangers, that shelter which it was unhappily denied under a paternal roof. I considered for a few moments what measure to take for the preserv-

ation

ation of this little foundling.—It appeared to be of the ſame age as my youngeſt ſon, who was only a week old; and I reſolved to place it in the care of the very nurſe who was to take the charge of my young Auguſtus. The Marchioneſs was too indifferent a mother to permit the nurſing of her children under her own eye;—at the end of a month ſhe always baniſhed them her ſight; and, from an obſtinate prepoſſeſſion that a cottage would harden their conſtitution and enſure their health, ſhe ſuffered them to remain, without any attention on her part, in the rural habitation of an elderly woman, who reſigned them the ſecond year to the care of

of a ſuperior order of domeſticks at home. — I endeavoured to remedy her neglect by conſtantly viſiting myſelf my beloved infants, whom I had the ſatisfaction of ſeeing bloom and thrive under their nurſe's care. — I ordered my carriage to drive immediately to the abode of this worthy woman, who joyfully undertook the charge committed to her.

Fearful that the child might not have been baptized, I named it myſelf Lewis Auguſtus, and deſired the nurſe would beſtow equal care upon it as ſhe would upon my new-born ſon, who was in three weeks to be committed to her care. She ſoon lulled the plaintive innocent

ment to rest; when she had satisfied with food its clamorous hunger; and I left it in her arms, having first taken from its waist the coral, by which I hoped one day to trace its birth. The succeeding day I paid a visit to the Count de Polan; and, upon my return to Paris, was shocked to receive information that my infant son was dangerously ill; and that the Marchioness, upon the first symptoms of indisposition, had sent him into the country, not doubting but that salutary air would infallibly restore him. I delayed not a moment to visit my poor child; and had the misfortune to find, upon my entering the cottage, by the excla-

 mations

mations and tears of the nurſe, that it was no more! — I felt the ſtroke with all a father's tenderneſs; but, endeavouring to aſſume the reſolution of a Chriſtian, I ſubmitted with humble reſignation to the irrevocable decree of heaven. The young Auguſtus was repoſing in a cradle; it ſmiled upon me with angelic innocence, and inſpired me with the moſt intereſting pity. A thought darted into my mind to adopt this little foundling; and, notwithſtanding my natural abhorrence to every ſpecies of deception, yet, in the preſent caſe, it appeared not only guiltleſs but laudable. I conſidered that, by acknowledging him for my own ſon, he would

eſcape

escape the indignities and mortifications to which a state of dependance is too often exposed from an unfeeling world: quieting therefore every scruple by the justification of a self-approving conscience, I imparted to the nurse my plan:—I gave her a strict command never to divulge the death of my son upon any account whatever, but to assist me in concealing it from the Marchioness, who, I urged, might naturally be induced, in the first emotions of her grief, to accuse her of negligence, and might even carry the warmth of her resentment so far as to cease being her friend.

The poor woman embraced the proposal with transports of gratitude; and, as my sanction absolved her from the commission of a crime in this deceit, she solemnly promised that no authority but mine should ever extort the secret. Fortunately none of the good woman's family were at home when the dear infant expired; and she found no difficulty in imposing upon them a deception they would never suspect. She dressed the fictitious Augustus de Soissons in the vestments of my departed child, and declared the foundling to be suddenly carried off by a convulsion.

It was several weeks before my wife expressed the smallest inclin-

ation

ation to fee her infant, fatisfied with hearing of its recovery and health: fhe found no time, from a continual fucceffion of amufements, to beftow upon maternal claims. She never had the moft diftant fufpicion of the deceit; and, the old woman dying about a twelvemonth afterwards, the fecret remained locked in my own bofom.

The young Auguftus difcovered, as his years increafed, a difpofition which promifed to repay my utmoft tendernefs. A ftrong genius for fcience and the polite arts were eafily difcoverable; I faw, with delight, thofe noble qualities of foul which befpoke the maturer virtues of his future character. With fighs

profound I made the ſad compariſon between his ſuppoſed brothers and himſelf; and dreaded nothing more than the misfortune of beholding this amiable and accompliſhed youth ſnatched from my arms by the real claims of parentage. Never could I perſuade myſelf to acknowledge, even to him, that I ſtood in no relationſhip to him but that of a friend. Conſidering him as the boaſt and ornament of my family, I could not ſupport the idea of voluntarily relinquiſhing ſuch a treaſure.

Thus have I deferred to the awful hour of death an avowal ſo painful, ſo important!—and could I, without injuſtice, ſtill conceal the

ſecret,

ſecret, I would quit the world the ſuppoſed and envied father of ſuch a ſon; but as I might, by an action ſo intereſted, deprive an illuſtrious family of its greateſt honour, and himſelf, perhaps, of a more exalted fortune, I yield, though reluctantly, thoſe pretenſions to his alliance, to which I have, alas! no natural right.

And now, my beloved Auguſtus, ſince this paper will not be peruſed by thee till thou haſt loſt for ever that imagined father who has watched over thy infancy, and reared thy blooming youth — need I expreſs a hope that thou wilt bear a tender remembrance of his affection?—thy natural parents, if they

yet exiſt, cannot have a fonder intereſt in thy welfare ; thy dutiful attentions to me have been exemplary : — mayeſt thou in thy deſcendants experience that comfort I have found in thee. Perſevere in the path of virtue and of honour — and may thy happineſs be equal to thy merits!

In one of my cabinets is a caſket carefully ſealed up, which will be delivered after my deceaſe. It contains the coral, which may one day aſſiſt and confirm the diſcovery of thy birth. Farewell for ever !

HENRY AUGUSTUS,
Marquis de Soiſſons.

When the Count had concluded the narrative, he found himſelf ſtill as ignorant as ever in regard to the real birth of his friend. Madame de Tourville, who had appeared uncommonly agitated during the recital, demanded of the Count, with viſible emotion, whether the coral had been produced?—He informed her that Auguſtus was in poſſeſſion of it, having receiv-ed it from his hands that morn-ing. —— "Fly then, my dear "Count," ſaid ſhe, ſtarting up; "a ſtrange preſentiment has ſeized "my heart! Oh! if that coral bears "the cypher of A. T. and is or-"namented with a wreath of eme-"ralds and brilliants, his unfortu-

"nate

" nate father was not unknown to " me." — Monſieur de Senanges caſting upon her an inquiſitive look of aſtoniſhment—" Interrogate me " not," ſhe cried; " ſuſpenſe muſt " ſtill keep me ſilent; a thouſand " tender and affecting ideas crowd " into my imagination; alternate " hopes and fears diſtract me :— " haſten to your friend, procure " the ſacred relic of his birth :—if " it confirms the ſtrong prepoſ- " ſeſſion of my mind, Auguſtus, " though the injured pledge of an " unhappy union, ſprings from the " nobleſt blood of France." Urged by the curioſity of impatient friendſhip, Monſieur de Senanges flew towards the caſtle; and fortunately

meeting

meeting the object of his ſearch, "Come, my friend," he cried, "accompany me to the pavilion— "produce the caſket—upon this "hour depends a diſcovery of the "utmoſt importance!"—The expreſſion of the Count's features, and his evident emotion, convinced the Chevalier that Senanges was become the maſter of his ſecret.— "Am I," interrupted he with an air of dignity, "deſcended from "a race equal to my ſoaring, my "ambitious mind?—or, from an "ignoble birth, do you pronounce "me unworthy of my education, "and beneath your friendſhip?— "Speak—complete my wretchedneſs, and let me fly from a world

"which ſports with my misfor-
"tunes!"—"Baniſh ſuch ill found-
"ed doubts," returned the Count—
"follow my ſteps, and learn not
"to diſtruſt that Providence which
"is the ſureſt guardian of unble-
"miſhed virtue."—With a coun-
tenance of unconvinced ſuſpicion
the impetuous Auguſtus followed
the ſteps of his anxious guide, into
whoſe hands he had reluctantly
yielded the caſket.

Madame de Tourville met the
Count at the entrance of the tem-
ple; trembling impatience agitated
every nerve—ſhe graſped the box—
broke open the ſeals — unclaſped
the caſe — diſcovered the coral —
and

and fainted in the Count's extended arms.

Auguftus arrived at this inftant! Every felfifh confideration vanifhed from his mind, and his whole attention was engaged in affifting her recovery.—She unclofed her eyes, and feebly exclaimed—" My fon! " My fon!"—The Chevalier fupported her on one knee—fhe perceived him—and, folding him to her bofom, thus continued — " Oh, gracious heaven! give me " ftrength to bear this ecftafy of " joy!—I have fuftained adverfity! " I have furvived misfortune! — " but never have till now experi- " enced the dangerous trial of op- " preffive happinefs!"—She gazed for

for a moment with ſpeechleſs fondneſs on the transfixed Auguſtus; and, ſtraining him again to her heart, continued thus—
" It was the force of ſympathy!—
" the voice of nature!—that
" inſpired thoſe ſentiments which
" intereſted me in the fate of my
" Auguſtus! Often, indeed, has
" memory fondly traced, in that
" majeſtic mien, thoſe graceful fea-
" tures, the dear reſemblance of a
" much-loved huſband! and what
" imagination ſeemed alone to
" paint, by muſing fancy's recollec-
" tive power, my raptured eyes now
" realize before me!—My long-
" loſt child!—thou art the in-
" jured—the lamented ſon of the
" Viſcount de St. Aubin!—and I

"am his unfortunate and aban-
"doned widow!"—In the countenance of the Chevalier was imprinted, at this diſcovery, the various emotions of his feeling heart—he was immoveable!—he ſpoke not!—wonder!—rapture!—tenderneſs!—expreſſed itſelf in his more than eloquent ſilence!——

When Madame de Tourville was a little recovered from her trance of joy, ſhe reſted herſelf upon a ſofa; tears flowed to her relief, and ſhe indulged thoſe tranſports of parental feelings which, till that hour, ſhe had never experienced through her life of ſorrow.

Monſieur de Senanges, though a ſilent, was yet a delighted, witneſs of

of an event ſo unexpected: with looks of cordial friendſhip he congratulated them on a diſcloſure ſo important, ſo intereſting!—When the power of language returned to Auguſtus, a tender ſcene of mutual happineſs enſued;—he ſeemed to have forgot even the woes of love in the exquiſite ſenſibility of filial endearments; but when he impatiently requeſted his newly acquired mother to enter upon the detail of circumſtances ſo important to them both—"Alas!" with a deep ſigh, ſhe replied, "you muſt ſpare me "a recital, which would, at the "ſame time, be a renewal of my "misfortunes!—they are already "traced by the pen of anguiſh,

"when

" when the heart yet bled with
" recent woes! My tale of misery
" is addressed to that incomparable
" friend, the Duchess de Gramont,
" a few days preceding her mar-
" riage: in her last illness she
" resigned it to me, from the
" generous principle of not risk-
" ing, after her death, the disclo-
" sure of events intended only for
" the bosom of friendship.—I will
" immediately put you in possession
" of this confidential letter, which
" paints the accumulated sorrows
" of an unhappy daughter, wife,
" and mother! — How often have
" I bathed it with my tears!—little
" imagining I could ever be so
" blest as to present it to a son,

 " whose

"whoſe death I had mourned ere
"I had even hailed his birth.
"When you ſhall have received it
"from my hands, I will leave you
"and the Count at liberty to pe-
"ruſe together a narrative which
"will tenderly affect your ſenſibi-
"lity.—Ah, my Auguſtus! —be
"kind to the frailties of a father,
"miſled by example, not naturally
"the child of vice—and pity the
"errors of a mother, whoſe unſuſ-
"picious innocence betrayed her
"heart, and rendered her the dupe
"of treacherous friendſhip! While
"you are acquainting yourſelf with
"the mournful records of your fa-
"mily, I will retire into my cloſet,
"to offer up my grateful adoration

" to that Power who has conduct-
" ed me through the thorny paths
" of life to crown my declining
" years with unexpected blessings
" I shall leave it to you, Augusta [illegible]
" to impart to your Leonora [illegible]
" covery so interesting [illegible]
" Marchioness and [illegible]
" the tenderest [illegible]
" me the [illegible]
" event [illegible]
" for their [illegible]
" render [illegible]
" happiness [illegible]
their wor[illegible]
to [illegible]
narrat[illegible]

returning, ſhe delivered it to her expecting ſon; and, bidding him adieu for the preſent, ſhe directed her ſteps once more towards the caſtle, where ſhe ſoon imparted to the charming ſiſters the wondrous event of that important day.

ADELAIDE DE TOURVILLE

TO

HENRIETTA DE VALIERE.

ABBEY-AUX-BOIS.

AND do you ſtill intereſt yourſelf, my amiable Henrietta, in the fate of an unfortunate, miſguided friend? can that blameleſs daughter, who is on the point of preſenting her hand, authorized by duty, beſtow one tender thought upon the guilty Adelaide?—Yes, the innocent, the perfect Henrietta, from her own conſcious virtues, can forgive the frailties of another!—You conjure me, by that tender friendſhip which once flattered all my wiſhes, to attend

tend your auſpicious nuptials—Ah, no!—my fatal preſence would dim with tears your hymeneal torch!—ſhould I dare to approach the altar of propitious love, parental approbation would ſhun the advance of filial diſobedience, and think its holy rites profaned by ſuch a witneſs! —ſcarcely have twenty-four revolving moons paſſed by ſince this widowed hand was plighted to a huſband — for whom I forfeited a daughter's name! — but ſoon the curſes of an irritated father overtook his guilty child!—that tie, unſanctified by him, fate ſoon diſſolved! —the object of my firſt and laſt affections, by remorſeleſs death, was ſnatched for ever from me!—yet I ſubmit, oh heaven, to thy decree!

nor,

nor, ſunk beneath the weight of merited afflictions, preſume to murmur at my lot.——

I am no longer diſtinguiſhed by the name of St. Aubin—an incenſed parent would, in his dying moments, have retracted the bleſſing I obtained, had I not reſumed that of Tourville.—You requeſt the ſtory of my woes from the generous wiſh, by ſharing to alleviate them. —Alas! nor time, nor penitence, can obliterate them from my memory!—but I obey you, and commence my ſad detail, regretting that the tear of friendſhip will bedew your bridal eye!——

You left me at the convent, when the Baroneſs de Valiere had ſum-

moned you home to make her a viſit of ſome weeks; and before your return I had quitted it, as I then thought, for ever. — Your gentle heart ſtill bears in remembrance our tender parting. — For ſome days I yielded to my ſorrows, and refuſed all offered conſolation. — At length the arrival of Mademoiſelle St. Aubin rouſed me from my lethargy — her affliction, the day ſhe entered our ſolemn abode, attracted my compaſſion, and engaged my attention. She had lately loſt a mother; and was placed by the Viſcount her father under the care of the Abbeſs, during the firſt days of her mourning. I forgot my own grief in ſoothing hers, and we

ſoon

ſoon commenced a mutual friend-ſhip. The natural gaiety of her diſ-poſition by degrees returned, and I reſumed my tranquillity, — but though her humour was obliging, and her converſation ſprightly and entertaining, I began to diſcover that ſhe poſſeſſed not a ſympathy of heart like yours.—She wanted that gentle ſenſibility, that winning ſoft-neſs, which ſo tenderly attached my ſoul to Henrietta!—Your frequent letters were a conſtant amuſement; and, vain of your affection, I ge-nerally made Amelia a ſharer in our correſpondence; but from the child-iſh idea, that you might conſider her as a rival in my affections, I forbore to mention her in my an-

ſwers.

ſwers.—When you complained of the irkſome engagements of public life, and expreſſed your ardent wiſhes to enjoy again the ſweet retirement you had left within our hallowed walls, Amelia never failed to inveigh againſt your ſentimental gravity, and to proteſt how much ſhe languiſhed to change places with you: ſhe deſcribed the gay abode of Paris as a terreſtrial paradiſe; and ſo far influenced my judgment as to make me anxiouſly long to partake of its enchanting pleaſures. —Such is the force of ill example! with Henrietta I was tranquil, virtuous, and happy!—my heart imbibed from hers the ſolidity of reaſon, the confidence of innocence,

cence, and the ſatisfaction of a ſelf-approving conſcience. With Amelia I became reſtleſs, melancholy, and unquiet: ſolitude began to loſe its charms, and, ſighing for the joys of a world yet unknown, I privately reproached my tardy parents for delaying my introduction into it. — Fatal miſtake! —dear-bought experience!—

One day Amelia received a letter, which ſeemed to tranſport her. "Thank heaven," ſaid ſhe, "my "brother comes to viſit me to-"morrow; you ſhall ſee him Ade-"laide; and, if you can behold "him with indifference, you have "an icy heart." When I aroſe the next morning, I had not for-

gotten

gotten theſe words; and, feeling a ſtronger inclination to conquer than be conquered, I ſtudiouſly endeavoured to ſet off my little perſon to the beſt advantage. I looked in my glaſs — the glow of vanity animated my complexion; and I deſcended into the parlour with a ſecret triumph, where I found my new friend converſing with her brother at the grate. — She preſented him to me; and in a moment I was loſt to every idea but that of inſpiring Monſieur de St. Aubin with the ſame ſentiments I felt for him. His perſon was uncommonly handſome; and the graces of his addreſs were irreſiſtible — he caſt upon me ſuch a penetrating look, that I fooliſhly

foolifhly believed he read what paffed in my heart. A confcious blufh fuffufed my cheek; and, to conceal it, I turned away my eyes, not confidering that my aukward confufion was moft likely to betray me. While I was in this diftreffing fituation, I heard him whifper to his fifter, "My God, Amelia! "what an angel!" — "Truly," replied fhe, laughing, "you both "feem planet-ftruck, and I am "likely to have a charming time "of it!"

"Come, for heaven's fake, bro-"ther; reaffume your reafon, and "inform me how the dear world of "Paris goes on."—She proceeded to afk ten thoufand queftions in a breath,

breath, and concluded with charging him to tell her father, that, if he did not recall her from the convent, ſhe ſhould actually fall a victim to deſpair.—" Ah, ſiſter!" returned he, with an expreſſive look at me, " if you expected to retain " me an advocate in ſuch a cauſe, " you ſhould not have expoſed me " to the temptation of betraying " your confidence!—how can I " plead againſt myſelf, and aſſiſt in " removing you from a ſpot where " my whole ſoul is riveted!—Allow " me at leaſt to continue a few " days in your neighbourhood, to re- " new theſe heavenly viſits." He ſtaid till the bell rung for dinner, and left

left me too well convinced that I had not an icy heart! — In the evening Amelia entered my chamber with an archneſs in her looks which proved that ſhe had read my ſentiments.—" Will you believe it, " child?" ſaid ſhe, " I have al- " ready received a letter from my " vanquiſhed brother—you are the " ſubject of every line; take it, there- " fore, Mademoiſelle, and peruſe it " at your leiſure."—I was covered with confuſion;—but, however flattering this intelligence was to my vanity, I had the prudence and reſolution to reſiſt the tempting offer.—Oh, that I had ſtill maintained ſo laudable a conduct!—but, alas! — love triumphed over the feeble

feeble dictates of reafon and obedience; and the promife of my hand foon followed the facrifice of my heart.—The feducing founds of ardent paffion were ever in my ear—Amelia echoed all her brother's vows — my Henrietta was abfent, and I liftened! — My youth — my inexperience — muft abfolve my fault — and oh! my fufferings have dearly paid the forfeit of my duty. It was not till the victory of my affections was completed that Amelia alarmed my doubts of obtaining the mutual confent of our parents to our union, by informing me that, in the early part of life, the Vifcount de St. Aubin and my father became inveterate

terate foes, from ſome miſunderſtanding in an affair of importance, in which they were both concerned: that they had an encounter, wherein each was ſlightly wounded, but which was by no means ſucceſsful in effecting a reconciliation. I was thunderſtruck at this intelligence, and did not attempt to conceal from Amelia that my every hope of happineſs was centred in her brother. She failed not to betray to him the weakneſs I acknowledged; — ſhe contrived an interview before reflection could aſſert its powers, and artfully introduced my conqueror, to ſubdue the ſcruples of conflicting duty. The inſinuating St. Aubin had no

ſooner prevailed upon me, by ſighs and tears, aſſiſted by the ardent rhetoric of love, to promiſe I would be only his, than he exerted all his fatal influence to perſuade me to fly with him immediately to the altar. In vain I reminded him that a clandeſtine marriage would only exaſperate againſt me a father on whoſe approbation I depended for an ample dowry, and who might never forgive my daring to unite my hand unlicenſed by his authority — that, unleſs the unfortunate breach between our parents could be healed by a propoſed alliance, and that the Viſcount de St. Aubin approved and ratified the treaty by an equal fortune, I knew too

well

well the conſequence. He artfully replied to theſe remonſtrances, that, as I was myſelf the only object of his wiſhes, a ſordid impulſe ſhould never induce him to run the riſk of loſing me for ever; and that, if I loved like him, I ſhould not ſcruple to ſacrifice to ſo generous a paſſion the empty vanity of wealth. Theſe diſintereſted proofs of the tendereſt attachment vanquiſhed each filial reſolution; and, as he was dearer to me than life itſelf, I yielded at length to his perſuaſive arguments, and engaged my honour to meet him at the altar the firſt moment that a proper opportunity offered. —My lover was in ecſtaſy; and, though his impatience urged me to

elope with him from the convent, yet he consented to defer his happiness till my arrival at Paris, where I had received the unexpected commands of my parents to attend them. I confess I rejoiced then at a circumstance which, in any other situation, would have been a source of the greatest regret—I mean that of your removal from Paris, the day before I reached it. Accustomed to deposit in the bosom of Henrietta every anxiety, and every pleasure, the conscious error of my conduct made me forebode the detection of her penetrating eyes. I dreaded her censure—her reproaches:—yet so infatuated was I by an extravagant passion, that

that I would have facrificed to it my deareft friendfhip. Mademoifelle de St. Aubin received, about the fame time, the permiffion of the Vifcount to quit a retirement fo repugnant to her inclinations. She obeyed with tranfport the delightful fummons; but we could propofe no other intercourfe than that of letters: interviews, except in public, were impoffible, from the unfortunate animofity fubfifting between our families. We often however exchanged epiftolary converfe, without the leaft danger of difcovery from the vigilance of thofe who had no reafon to fufpect our intimacy: and, having the prudence never to employ the con-

fidence of servants in a transaction of such danger and importance, we artfully gave and received our letters, when we met in public, without observation. By these means St. Aubin and myself continued the tender intercourse of mutual vows. Upon my return home I had reason to conceive that my sudden removal from the convent was occasioned by my father's objection to my forming any friendship with Mademoiselle de St. Aubin: though he never hinted the idea, except by asking me, in a careless manner, how I liked that young lady. Love had taught me dissimulation; and reading in his eyes an immediate prohibition which might, from the intelligence

intelligence of mine, endanger a discovery, I instantly became guilty of the first falsehood I had ever uttered, by saying that I could form little opinion of her character, being only personally acquainted with her, as her great affliction for her recent loss made her avoid society at the Abbey-aux-Bois. He appeared pleased with this information, and immediately began a lecture upon filial duty and obedience; from which I collected the fatal assurance that I must expect no influence from any choice of my own in marriage — that himself and my mother were the proper judges in a cause of such consequence as my settlement in life;

and that they had provided for me a hufband, both worthy and amiable, whom they fhould have the fatisfaction of prefenting to me upon his return from his travels. The ftern determination of my father flattered me with no hopes of melting him by entreaties; — my heart felt all the horror of my fituation, but filence gave the imaginary confent, accompanied by a refpectful obeifance from my trembling knees; he obferved my confufion, and, attributing it to timidity, permitted me to retire; while, putting into my hand a miniature fet round with brilliants — " There, " Adelaide," faid he, " view in " that portrait the refemblance of " the

" the lover diſtinguiſhed by my " choice, and whom you have not " only my conſent but my com- " mands to receive as your future " huſband.—You are too young, " and too delicate, to have ſuffered " yet any impreſſion on your heart; " let it here fix upon him to whom " I have already promiſed you " hand." Scarcely had I power to reach my apartment, where I locked myſelf in to ſhed a torrent of tears. I ſaw no remedy but almoſt an immediate marriage with the man I loved.—My father's cruel diſregard to my inclination hardened my mind, and confirmed me more ſtrongly in my diſobedience.—Without even deigning to

caſt my eyes upon the picture, I daſhed it with ſcorn into a box of ſhells, which ſtood open in the corner of the room. Having conſidered ſome time the meaſures neceſſary to take, I judged it prudent not to alarm St. Aubin with the idea of a rival, leſt he might be induced to take meaſures which might endanger a diſcovery.—I waited therefore for the reception of his next epiſtle, to fix in my reply our private nuptials.

The more I reflected upon my ſituation, the more I became reconciled to an act of diſobedience, which I thought was juſtified by love.—I felt indeed a ſtrong reluctance to wound the boſom of a tender

tender mother, who merited all my duty and affection; but I could not hope to find in her a refuge from my father's fury, if I even dared to attempt disclosing to her ear the immoveable attachment of my heart to the descendant of an enemy.—Her bosom was the abode of every gentle virtue, but I knew too well it was impenetrable to weakness — and therefore I could not encourage the most distant hope that she would be indulgent to a refractory child, who had presumed to fix her wishes on an object whose family had incurred the hatred of mine. — I received this very evening a letter full of such tender complaints for my retard-

ing

ing our union, and of ſuch irreſiſtible entreaties to complete the felicity of St. Aubin — that love prevailed — and, in a fatal hour, I forfeited the bleſſing of a father to receive the hand of an inconſtand huſband ! ——

Mademoiſelle de St. Aubin, who had been the ſtrong promoter of our marriage, was alſo the witneſs of it. —When the irrevocable knot was tied, my reſolution, inſtead of increaſing, entirely forſook me ! — and, though I had before determined to throw myſelf at the feet of my parents, and to implore their pardon, I now found myſelf utterly incapable of confronting their merited reſentment. —— After many vain

vain attempts to write, I at length addreſſed my mother, ſupplicating her mediation with my father, and their joint permiſſion to throw myſelf at their feet with a huſband, whoſe illuſtrious family I flattered myſelf would not be conſidered as unworthy their alliance. — I waited with trembling impatience for my doom, nor could the affectionate endearments of St. Aubin reaſſure my fears. — How inconſiſtent is the human mind! — no reflections had force to reſtrain me from an action, which now appeared in all its horrors! — Too late the voice of duty whiſpered to my conſcience, and reproached me with my ingratitude and diſobedience!

dience! — I had dared to commit a deed I could neither revoke nor juftify. — After having been tortured by an hour's fufpenfe, a packet was prefented me by the returning meffenger — with a fatal prefentiment I opened it!—it contained my own letter, with only the following diftracting lines written in the cover, in my mother's hand! ——

" Wretched, imprudent girl!—
" in making choice of St. Aubin
" for a hufband thou haft loft
" every pretenfion to a father's
" bleffing!—that father renounces
" thee for ever!—thy duplicity of
" conduct aggravates thy crime,
" by adding deceit to difobedi-

" ence.

" ence. — Allied to the family he
" moſt deteſts—never will he again
" behold thee.—Fly then far hence,
" and repent at a diſtance thy unfor-
" tunate union!"

I was inſenſible for near an hour! When I recovered, finding myſelf alone with Amelia, wildly I inquired for her brother — ſhe ſoothed my affliction, entreated me to be comforted, and aſſured me I had every thing to hope from the Viſcount's honour and humanity, to whom his ſon had that moment flown to implore protection for his Adelaide. —But, alas! his heart was equally obdurate! — the family reſentment, which had ſo long ſubſiſted between him and Monſieur de Tourville, now

now rofe from its embers with redoubled fury :—and fo vehemently was he exafperated againft his fon for giving his hand to the daughter of his foe profeffed, that he banifhed him eternally from his prefence!—In the bitternefs of anguifh I reproached St. Aubin for having trepanned me into an union with him: he could be no ftranger to the implacable fpirit of his father;—and my eyes were now opened to his motives for a private marriage, which muft have been actuated by the certainty of a refufal on his fide, that might, by publifhing our mutual attachment, from the interpofition of my parents,

parents, have caufed an everlafting feparation.

He tenderly implored my pardon, and conjured me to attribute his conduct to excefs of paffion.—He added, that, fince he had, for my fake, equally incurred parental difpleafure, we ought, by mutually confoling each other, to compenfate for every pecu-
" niary difappointment.—" Leave
" to vulgar minds," continued he,
" the fordid pleafures of unyield-
" ing pelf — be love our treafure!
" —the rural cottage and the hum-
" ble vale fhall impart to our united
" fouls more genuine happinefs than
" the falfe fplendour of exalted
" life!—let me be all to Adelaide,

" ſince Adelaide is all to me!"—
I was melted by his perſuaſive arguments; love pleaded in my boſom, and ſtilled the tumults of upbraiding duty.

Upon reconſidering the lines traced by my mother's hand, I cheriſhed hopes that they were only the haſty ſentiments of an incenſed father, who might, by her gentle offices, at length be induced to ſoften in my favour.—She had not touched upon her own reſentment —a circumſtance of cordial comfort to my heart—it formed the moſt ſanguine expectations; and I flattered myſelf that time might efface the remembrance of my fault.—With this view I made ſeveral attempts

tempts to ſubdue the boſom of maternal anger; but, alas! every plea was ineffectual; and I found that all my remaining happineſs muſt centre in the affections of a huſband!

To retain them I found more difficult than the ſtrength of my own, and my confidence in his, attachment could have believed.—The Viſcount, through the promiſed interceſſion of Mademoiſelle de St. Aubin, who acknowledged herſelf his favourite child, and continued to profeſs for me the warmeſt friendſhip, was prevailed upon to reſign to his ſon a ſmall eſtate a very few leagues from Paris; whither we retired—and where I could

have tafted, with my beloved St. Aubin, every joy that competency can give to an unafpiring mind;—but, born to high expectations, and endued with a tafte for every expenfive pleafure, he fighed for dear variety, and found the infipid attentions of a wife he once adored did not compenfate for thofe loft delights he had refigned for her!—I faw the labouring conflicts of his foul; and, fenfible that reproaches were not likely to ftrengthen his wavering attachment, I urged him to change the fcene; and, by mixing with his former affociates at Paris, to diffipate, in fome meafure, the remorfe of having incurred the refentment of a father.—With avidity

dity he embraced a propoſal ſo agreeable to his inclinations. He even, in the gaiety of his heart, expreſſed a wiſh that I would accompany him; but my ſpirits were too much d.preſſed for me to think of quitting a retirement which allowed me the indulgence of my ſor-rows.

For ſome months St. Aubin divided his time between Paris and our ſweet retreat; and I had no reaſon to complain of his want of tenderneſs.—I ever welcomed him with ſmiles; and he either felt or counterfeited raptures when he returned. But, by degrees, his viſits at home were leſs frequent: he became ſilent and reſerved; and, if I gently reproached his coldneſs, or dropped

an involuntary tear, he chid me with morofenefs. I had no participating friend to fhare my griefs; and, by partaking to relieve them, my own family, and that of St. Aubin, united to difclaim me; even my fweet Henrietta, fubmiffive to parental laws, renounced in the rebellious child the guilty friend!

Thus was I excluded from the world, and left a prey to an unavailing penitence, which nothing but the indifference of the man for whom I had refigned fo much could have awakened in me!—Amelia, it is true, fometimes vifited me in my folitude; but her attentions began likewife to be on the wane; and I, by fad experience, found the instability

bility of friendſhip as well as love. She was wholly occupied by worldly pleaſures — ſplendour and parade dazzled her ſenſes — ambition, vanity, and pride, obſtructed in her heart even the natural ſoftneſs and compaſſion of her ſex.

When I lamented one day the declining affection of her brother, and his continual abſences, inſtead of being moved by my tears, or ſoothing my diſtreſs, ſhe laughed at my folly, and ironically told me, that I muſt poſſeſs a large portion of vanity, indeed, to expect conſtancy in man, or truth in plighted faith! — that, inſtead of weeping the inattentions of a huſband, I ought to requite them;

and, by exhibiting my boaſted beauty to the world, to attract ſurrounding lovers.

Shocked with the avowal of ſuch ſentiments, I rebuked her with a warmth which drew upon me the moſt cruel reproaches! — She upbraided me with my ingratitude; — and, dropping the veil of unſubſtantial friendſhip, her dark ſoul ſtood all confeſſed before me! — She told me haughtily that I owed to her my preſent maintenance — that, when my own family arrogantly diſclaimed alliance with her illuſtrious houſe, and reprobated me for ever, as though I had contaminated the blood I had ſo greatly ennobled, her generous interpo-

ſition

ſition had prevailed upon her father (notwithſtanding my wily arts had ſeduced an only ſon to diſobedience) to ſhelter me from poverty and want! — I diſdained a reply to ſuch inſulting language; and, though I felt all the indignation that wounded pride, yet conſcious ſuperiority, could inſpire, I aſſumed an air of provoking unconcern: and coldly ſaying—I left her to the reflections of her heart, which might ſuggeſt to her a ſupply of new invectives — retired to my chamber, where, in an agony of tears, I bewailed my ſituation, and ruminated upon the misfortunes I had brought upon myſelf. — I ſoon heard her carriage drive from

from the door; and, I confeſs, felt aſtoniſhed that, after the repeated and unnumbered profeſſions of her inviolable friendſhip, ſhe could have reſolution or indifference enough to leave me upon ſuch terms. — But I ſhortly found that ſhe wiſhed an opportunity to give up my acquaintance, and had created a voluntary diſpute, to throw upon me the odium of her deſertion.

Though I had diſcovered ſince our alliance many failings in her character, and errors in her conduct, which I attributed to the neglects of a very ſuperficial education, yet little did I think her capable of ſuch abject ſentiments: I had a confidence in her affection, and

and had in reality for her the regard ſhe only perſonated for me: — my relenting heart prepared to receive her conceſſions, felt, conſequently, ſtrongly mortified by her ſudden departure, which was an indication how unimportant I was become to her! — The next day St. Aubin unexpectedly arrived.—Cruel as were his neglects, my heart bounded at his approach. — Had he beſtowed on me one ſmile, I could have forgotten every former unkindneſs — but, alas!— frowns lowered upon his brow! — and the impending tempeſt lightened in his eye!—Notwithſtanding all my conſcious innocence, I trembled. — He obſerved this falſe evi-

dence of guilt, and at length broke the awful ſilence.—"You have "done well, Adelaide," ſaid he in a ſtern accent, "to deprive "yourſelf of the only friend for-"tune had left you:—your ingra-"titude of temper has extended "itſelf to the ſiſter of your huſ-"band;—but be aſſured the in-"vectives you have dared to "beſtow on Mademoiſelle de St. "Aubin ſhall be properly reſent-"ed by a brother, who will ſuffer "no indignities from a dependent "wife.—In forfeiting Amelia's "friendſhip you have loſt all pre-"tenſions to my love."—"Say "rather," replied I, in a tone raiſed by my indignation, "that

"the

" the extinction of that feeble love " preceded even the forfeit of that " boasted friendship; and, conse- " quently, has exposed me to the " contempt and ridicule of your " sister. I hope, however, wretched " as I am, I shall always have spi- " rit left to resent an insult offered " to my honour, and virtue to " protect it. Her friendship I " solemnly abjure, with all the " scorn it merits; — the woman " who can propose retaliation for " a husband's infidelity must be " unworthy the sacred name of " friend, and lost to every senti- " ment of delicacy!" — " When a " wife descends to make complaints " of a husband, she must expect," interrupted

interrupted he, "the cenfure of "the world.—Amelia treated you, "in all probability, with the levity "your conduct merits. —The wo- "man who is guilty of one breach "of duty may be fuppofed capa- "ble of more; and fhe who could "act in defiance of parental claims "will fcarcely be very fcrupulous "in regard to conjugal ones — wit- "nefs myfelf," affuming an air of aggravating indifference and ironi- cal eafe—"my paffion for Adelaide "de Tourville fubdued even the "refpect I owed my father;—and "when that fubfides another object "(what mortal can refift almighty "love!) may have power to make "me forget the marriage vow."—

"Ah,

" Ah, barbarous St. Aubin!" cried I, burſting into tears, " can the " man for whom I reſigned each " filial ſentiment reproach the ac- " tion he himſelf inſpired?—No, " —ungrateful, cruel huſband!—it " was not from levity of conduct " that I dared to break through the " firſt ties of duty!—A pure, a " ſtrong, unalterable love, attached " me to an object I once thought " worthy of it!—it ſeduced my in- " experienced youth and artleſs " affections from the path of pru- " dence and diſcretion.—I ſacrificed " my heart!—You ſaw your con- " queſt, and obtained my hand!— " At the holy altar I reſigned my " ſelf your legal victim!—how

" have you repaid my love, my
" confidence?—Fatal weakneſs!—
" I have incurred the curſe of diſ-
" obedience!—and thus, juſtly re-
" nounced by an offended father,
" though cruelly abandoned by
" an ungrateful huſband, I have
" hoarded up for my remaining days
" remorſe and wretchedneſs!"—I
fixed my flowing eyes upon him;
he regarded me with a mixture of
pity, tenderneſs, and ſhame!—He
took my hand, and gently preſſing it,
melted into tears.—Inſtantly my
anger vaniſhed—I ſunk upon my
knees, and implored his forgiveneſs
if I had, in the anguiſh of my ſoul,
too warmly upbraided him.—He
raiſed me inſtantly; and, folding
me

me in his arms, conjured me to be comforted, and acknowledged he had merited my reproaches, and was himſelf the ſole aggreſſor.

"Alas!" ſaid he, "to one ſe-
"duced, like me, ſo early by the
"faſcinating follies of the world—
"how arduous the taſk to fly its
"ſtrong temptations!—Be it thine,
"ſweet monitreſs, to point the path
"of happineſs and virtue—thine to
"recall the wanderer home!" He ceaſed;—Ah, happy moment of reviving love!—ye fleeting raptures, never to return!—St. Aubin was this evening every thing my fondeſt hopes could wiſh—I led him round our ſmall domain; his ſmiles illumed the blooming ſcene of na-

ture; it appeared to my delighted eyes a paradise regained! — The trees, the flowers, seemed conscious of my happiness; the grove with fresher verdure glowed, the shrubs with sweeter fragrance breathed. The succeeding morning dawned on our returning felicity: soft hope once more revisited my bosom: yet the rising fear of timid love would still obtrude itself an anxious guest. The artifices of Amelia I had too painfully experienced not to dread:— in ruminating on the character of this fickle, this beloved husband, I found his judgment was easily led astray by the prevalence of example and the force of precept; he was neither

proof

proof againſt the allurements cf vice nor the perſuaſive ſentiments of virtue; each reigned alternate— the impulſe of the moment ruled his heart, and the preſent object had the reſiſtleſs power of influencing his conduct. This was a dangerous weakneſs, and fatally predicted the ſequel of my misfortunes! St. Aubin joined me in my favourite alcove, which nature had adorned with fragrant jeſſamine and verdant myrtle.—I obſerved that he was abſorbed in thought; and, upon my addreſſing to him ſome intereſting expreſſions, he looked upon me with a mixture of tenderneſs and pity. Our tête à tête was ſhortly interrupted by the

arrival of a letter from Amelia I changed countenance at the well-known deceitful hand — my heart presaged a thousand fears, which were, alas! but too well founded, and too soon accomplished. Monsieur de St. Aubin looked distressed; he told me that he felt the most unfeigned reluctance to quit the enchanting spot which contained his treasure; yet he could not refuse the pressing invitation of his sister, who urged him to visit her that morning. He added, that the influence she possessed over his father made it necessary for him to continue on good terms with her: nor did he doubt but that her summons proceeded from an ardent

dent defire to be reconciled to me. He entreated I would, for his fake, forgive the unguarded impetuofity of her temper, which, he confeffed, fometimes obfcured her virtues; and even propofed my accompanying him to Paris. My pride could not admit the idea of condefcending to make the firft advances to a woman, who had not only groffly infulted, but had cruelly attempted to injure me in the affections of my hufband. I affured him however that, as I could refufe him nothing that was effential to his happinefs, I would confent to forgive Amelia, upon condition that fhe made our reconciliation her requeft. He was fatisfied; and, pro-

miſing to return in a few hours, tenderly embraced and quitted me. I gazed after him till diſtance concealed him from my view; and mourned his departure as if I had a preſentiment of my misfortune. Towards evening I began anxiouſly to expect him — upon every ſound of horſes on the adjacent road my bounding heart anticipated his approach—but, alas! every hope vaniſhed, when a note was preſented to me from the dear deceiver — it contained a few haſty lines, written by his trembling hand, entreating me not to be uneaſy at his abſence; that family buſineſs of importance to our happineſs detained him from me a few days; after

after which, he would fly on the wings of rapture to his beloved Adelaide. I kept this messenger while I wrote an answer, full of tenderness, lamenting our separation, but expressing my gratitude for his attention, my confidence in his affection, and my ardent wishes for success in his renewed application to the Viscount, which I concluded was the business in question.

A fortnight elapsed, yet he returned not to Belle-vue.—During that interval I had the consolation of receiving several pathetic letters, filled with reiterated vows of everlasting love, bewailing the necessity of his tedious absence;

but never mentioning either the name of his ſiſter or the progreſs of our cauſe.—At length he ceaſed to write, and all my fears and apprehenſive doubts returned with double force: even languid hope, like an expiring flame, ceaſed now to ſooth my deſolated heart! One day a letter, addreſſed to me in a diſguiſed hand, was brought, which threw me into an agony of grief. Theſe were the contents:

"Mademoiſelle de St. Aubin
"deceives you:—ſhe is a falſe
"friend:—ſhe has introduced to
"your huſband a widow of power-
"ful attractions —— Madame de
"Miran holds him in the ſtrongeſt
"chains—on her he laviſhes thoſe

"moments

"moments he abſents himſelf from "you."

Grief, jealouſy, and indignation, took poſſeſſion of my ſoul: in vain I endeavoured to diſcover to whoſe officious zeal I was indebted for this mortifying intelligence. The abruptneſs of the ſtyle was calculated to wound, and not to ſooth me; and was, therefore, evidently dictated by an enemy rather than a friend. Alas! I was but too conſcious that my imprudence had not left me one object whom I could call by that endearing name. "Ah," cried I, almoſt frantic with reſentment, "bereft of every conſo- "lation — forſaken by the world; "— is it alone to aggravate my

"wretchedneſs

"wretchedneſs that I am informed "my huſband is unfaithful!"—I flew to my writing-deſk; and, in the inconſiderate warmth of jealous paſſion, wrote and diſpatched to St. Aubin the following lines:

"If the charms of Madame de "Miran have not quite effaced the "remembrance of a once-loved "wife, fly inſtantly to Bell-vue, and "reſcue from the grave the wrong- "ed, the unfortunate, Adelaide!"

I waited the event in a ſtate little ſhort of deſperation, when the lines I here tranſcribe, which were delivered to me the ſucceeding day, bereaved me of every remaining hope.

"Reproaches

" Reproaches are ill qualified to " renew abated love ; — and the " charms of Madame de Miran, " powerful as they are, would be " insufficient to maintain their em- " pire, could she expect to reign " unrivalled in a heart formed for " inconstancy.

" Lewis de St. Aubin."

My pride alone could have prevented my sinking under this calamity. — The ingratitude of my cruel husband roused every sentiment which could be inspired by injured love. — I disdained to repeat my upbraidings; but left to time, and the influence of remorse, to plead

plead my caufe. When the firft tranfports of my rage fubfided, the fofter paffions foon returned;—affection once more mingled with my refentment; and pity for the yet loved caufe of all my woes extinguifhed even the force of jealoufy. A fixed melancholy preyed upon my fpirits—the tears of filent anguifh rolled inceffantly down my cheek: — without a friend to participate and footh my forrows, I was, perhaps, the moft miferable being that exifted. Weeks and months paffed on, yet my inhuman hufband, ftill abfent from me, continued his career of fatal follies. To enhance my misfortunes, the period approached which was to

render

render me a wretched mother. The force of maternal feelings prevailed upon me to addrefs once more this dear, this cruel hufband! — and to conjure him, for the fake of an innocent infant, to confent to receive it at its birth from the arms of a parent who would too probably fall the early facrifice of his unkindnefs!

I difpatched this letter by an old gardener, who was my only male domeftic—charging him to deliver it himfelf, if poffible, into the hands of his mafter. — The good man looked at me with honeft earneftnefs; and, perceiving that I wept, (though I endeavoured to conceal my emotion) he told me his heart

bled

bled for me — that he rejoiced in an opportunity of doing me ſervice, and would not leave Paris till he had executed his commiſſion : — " Be comforted, my ſweet young " lady," continued he, " I will " warrant I ſhall bring happy " tidings."

It was ſo long ſince I had heard the ſoothing voice of kindneſs, that I was ſenſibly affected with the words of this worthy man—I thanked him heartily for his attachment, and aſſured him that, if he ſucceeded, I ſhould ever eſteem him as my guardian angel. — As he was obliged to walk to Paris, I allowed him two days to perform his journey and to return — what an interval

interval of hope and fear for me! — I watched at my window the whole day which was fixed for his arrival — the tortures of ſuſpenſe that I underwent can only be conceived by thoſe who have loved like me! — At length I perceived him advancing with ſlow and tottering ſteps—I deſcended into the garden, and haſtened to meet my aged meſſenger. — " Oh, Jaquelin," I exclaimed — " do you bring me " life or death!" — He caſt upon me ſuch a look of woe, that, in a moment, I read my diſappointment! — I ſunk down upon the ſtump of an old tree—and, had not a flood of tears ruſhed to my relief, I think I muſt have expired.—The poor old

man

man ſtood by, the image of deſpair! — he wrung his withered hands — tore his grey locks — while the big drops rolled down his furrowed cheek! — At length I broke the painful ſilence: —" In pity tell me," I cried, " the extent of my miſery " —I am inured to adverſity—and " ſtand now prepared for all the " horrors of my fate! — Monſieur " de St. Aubin cruelly perſiſts in " abandoning his wretched wife! " —Deaf to the pleadings of nature " and humanity — he leaves his " child an orphan!" — " Alas, " Madam!" replied Jaquelin — " your ſorrows cut my very ſoul! " — but it is in vain to deceive " you — my young maſter has

" quitted

" quitted Paris, and is ſet out for
" Italy ! — But take comfort — he
" may yet ſoon return." — " Ah !
exclaimed I, ſtrongly agitated —
" can you name me the compa-
" nion of his flight ! — too ſurely
" Madame de Miran is the fatal
" object for whom he forſakes the
" unfortunate Adelaide !"—— It is
amazing that I could ſupport this
event with ſo much compoſure —
but I confeſs that, at that moment,
I felt the ſhock of his departure
with leſs violence than I ſhould
have done an abſolute refuſal of my
petition — that would have implied
a hardened heart indeed — whereas
his quitting France with the pre-
ſent object of a volatile paſſion

was only the natural effect of female artifice.—Time would dispel a temporary love;—I consequently cherished hopes that indifference for my rival might restore him to my arms; and founded the flattering expectation from the acknowledged inconstancy of his disposition.—Upon interrogating my faithful ambassador, he confessed that Madame de Miran was actually with my wanderer.—Amelia had made no secret of it to Jaquelin, but had informed him of it with malicious pleasure.—He had applied to her for the residence of his master—and she had vouchsafed to order his admittance into her presence.—"Upon my describing,"

continued

continued the good man, " your
" inquietude, ſhe laughed diſ-
" dainfully, and ſaid you might
" thank yourſelf for your huſ-
" band's infidelity—that your con-
" tinued jealouſy and inceſſant
" bewailings, for having incurred
" by your marriage with him
" your parents' diſpleaſure, had
" exhauſted her brother's patience,
" and entirely extinguiſhed his af-
" fections—that, for her part, you
" had treated her with too much
" inſolence and ingratitude to re-
" tain her friendſhip — and that
" ſhe was unalterably determined
" to trouble herſelf no more about
" you! — I preſumed to plead
" your cauſe with honeſt warmth

 " —but

" — but ſhe commanded me to be
" ſilent, and inſiſted upon my retir-
" ing with a tone ſo abſolute, that
" I inſtantly obeyed her. — De-
" termined for your ſake, my dear
" young lady, to gain all the intel-
" ligence I could in this myſterious
" affair, I viſited the ſervants hall
" under pretence of taking ſome
" refreſhment; where I found one
" of the domeſtics as communi-
" cative as I could wiſh.—He told
" me that Madame de St. Aubin,
" who had reſided conſtantly with
" the Viſcount ſince her brother's
" marriage, had eſtabliſhed her in-
" fluence upon the reſentment of
" his father; that without the
" knowledge of the Viſcount ſhe
" privately

" privately visited her brother, and " had introduced him to a young " widow of incomparable beauty, " but light character, with the ini- " quitous design of separating him " from you. Her wicked arts pre- " vailed. — My thoughtless master " became enamoured with Ma- " dame de Miran, and was easily " persuaded, by a cruel sister, to " abandon his charming wife. Ma- " dame de St. Aubin foreseeing " that you, Madam, might again " allure him to Belle-vue, proposed " to your rival to draw him into " Italy, where she flatters herself " that she will establish her em- " pire. Her dread of the Viscount's " reconciliation with his son is an-

" other motive, besides her hatred
" of you, to promote his absence:
" the very elopement she herself
" conceived and planned has been
" urged by her to her father as
" a fresh proof of my young mas-
" ter's dissolute conduct:—in short,
" she uses every argument to ex-
" asperate him more against you
" both, with the dishonourable
" view of securing to herself his
" noble fortune. It is but too pro-
" bable she will succeed; the Vis-
" count grows infirm—his intel-
" lects decline—and, as she never
" leaves him, she has every advan-
" tage her base soul can wish."
Thus ended the poor old man's
narrative. I thanked him for his
honest

honeſt zeal; and to his conſoling and religious admonitions I owed the reſignation with which I endeavoured to ſupport my calamities. My two female attendants were the wife and daughter of this worthy creature; they had been recommended by Amelia upon our firſt arrival at Belle-vue, and, as they had inhabited this houſe for many years, I had no inclination to remove them.

Janetton had nurſed Mademoiſelle de St. Aubin, and Nanette was her foſter-ſiſter. As they were totally dependant on her bounty, it is natural to ſuppoſe they were ſtrictly attached to her: they had frequently attempted to ingratiate

themſelves into my confidence; but I never liked the freedom of their manners; the mother was a compound of low art and fawning flattery; the daughter, of affected ignorance, yet aſſuming pertneſs— I always kept them at a diſtance, and ever preferred ſolitude, and the contemplation of my ſorrows, to their converſation; conſequently they looked upon me as a proud creature, who merited the misfortunes of my deſtiny.—Jaquelin, however, became my favourite— my only friend:—his ſimplicity of manners were marked on his open countenance—his actions were regulated by the principles of virtue, and his ſentiments ſpoke the language

guage of a heart which would have done honour to exalted rank. One day Janetton aſked my permiſſion to make a viſit to a ſick aunt in Paris: I readily granted her requeſt, and conſented to ſpare her for a couple of days. After dinner I ſtrolled into the garden, which I commonly did every afternoon, though the coldneſs of the weather rendered it far from pleaſant.—The good Jaquelin met me, and, reſpecfully accoſting me, begged I would inform him whether his wife had received my permiſſion to attend Mademoiſelle de St. Aubin!—I looked ſurpriſed, and anſwered that ſhe had mentioned the illneſs of an aunt as the motive of her abſence.

absence. "Then," replied he, "she "has deceived you Madam — by "Nanette's confession to me she "is going to Paris upon the sum- "mons of Mademoiselle de St. "Aubin, who has sent for her a "horse and servant, which mys- "teriously waited at the corner of "the lane; and the jade is actually "departed without even consult- "ing my pleasure.—She is gone "to plot and act mischief with that "implacable fury!" — "Compose "yourself, my good friend," returned I, "no harm can en- "sue from this visit.—Alas! what "further injury can Amelia offer "the wretched Adelaide! — her "cruel vengeance has been long

"complete,

" complete, and I am now reduced " below her malice!—It is natural " ſhe ſhould regard her nurſe, " barbarian as ſhe is; — and I " would upon no account de- " prive your wife of any mark of " her lady's liberality." — " Ah, " you are too good for this world!" replied Jaquelin, ſhaking his head: " but, however, had I been at " home time enough to coun- " teract your orders (which, upon " this occaſion, I ſhould have taken " the liberty of doing), Janetton " ſhould have found me once too " cunning for her." — He left me muttering to himſelf, and ſhrugging up his ſhoulders, to vent upon Nanette the overflowings of that well-meant

well-meant zeal for his unfortunate miſtreſs, which ſuperſeded in his boſom even his conjugal and parental affections.

Janetton punctually returned on the appointed day; and, more officious than ever to pleaſe, became rather troubleſome by her aſſiduities — but, irkſome as they were, being conſcious that I ſhould too ſoon require her tenderneſs and care, I pretended to receive them with gratitude. In regard to my own life I ſhould have been totally indifferent; but, as far as it was concerned with that of an innocent infant, whoſe exiſtence I ardently wiſhed to preſerve, (in hopes of preſenting it ſome day to an affec-

tionate

tionate father) I refolved no attention fhould be wanting on my part which maternal duty could fuggeft.—I even began to take fome degree of delight in arranging a nurfery; and mufed, with melancholy pleafure, upon the future bleffing yet in ftore.—Though, alas! in anticipating a mother's fondnefs I painfully regretted my happinefs muft be incomplete in the agonizing recollection of my forfaken widowed ftate!—I was roufed from one of thefe reveries by Jaquelin's knocking at my chamber door. I fat reclining on a chair, one foot refting on the rocker of a cradle, which, with involuntary motion, rolled it deli-

berately

berately to and fro, with as much care as if it were already the repoſitory of a ſleeping infant.—The door opened, and diſcovered to my view my good old friend bending under the weight of a large coffer.—His countenance was unuſually gay—he placed his load upon the table.—"There," ſaid he, "thank God, "Providence has ſent us ſome-"thing."—He proceeded to untie the cordage—"But how," ſaid I, "did you gain poſſeſſion of this "prize?—Are you very certain "that it belongs to us?"—"Aye, "by St. Jerome does it," replied he;—"is not your name St. Au-"bin?—Look at the addreſs."—I roſe to examine it—but what various

tious emotions of hope and fear I ſuſtained upon diſcovering the well-known characters to be written by my beloved mother! — I claſped my uplifted hands with tranſport, and uttered my grateful thanks to that Being who ſeemed now to look with pity on me!

When Jaquelin had finiſhed opening it — "There," ſaid he, "my "ſweet miſtreſs; feaſt yourſelf with "the contents, and believe old "Jaquelin another time."—So ſaying, the worthy creature left me. For ſome moments I was incapable of examining the trunk; my whole frame ſhook with an univerſal tremour. — At length my trembling hands removed the paper which

was

was ſpread upon the ſurface; and I found, to my aſtoniſhment, a complete ſet of the moſt elegant infant habiliments. In vain I ſearched for a few lines of maternal tenderneſs, to convey one gentle bleſſing to my contrite heart, revoking the cruel ſentence of a father's curſe! — Suddenly I eſpied, at the bottom of the box, two papers, ſealed up and directed to Adelaide. — The firſt contained a beautiful gold coral, which had been mine in infancy, richly adorned with jewels, and ſtamped with the initials of my name—the other enveloped a hundred louis d'ors—but no addreſs to myſelf had I the happineſs to find!—however I

looked

looked upon theſe unexpected attentions as auſpicious omens of a future pardon.—I wept for near an hour, with tears of heartfelt gratitude, over theſe tokens of a mother's care; and, at length, calling in my three domeſtics, in the effuſion of my joy I made them the partakers of ſo flattering an event; and aſked Jaquelin from whence he had received the box: he informed me that, on opening a back door, he found it placed upon the ſtep; and that, on reading the ſuperſcription, he brought it inſtantly to me.—I perceived Janetton and Nanette to look ſignificantly upon one another, and that their reſpect conſiderably increaſed though—I

thought I traced upon the countenance of the former a kind of conſcious ſhame, which I attributed to the corrections of remorſe for having attempted to deceive me in her late excurſion to Paris.—I made each of them a preſent out of my little ſtore:—the old man would have rejected the donation, and have prevented their receiving it, but I made a point of his accepting theſe tokens of my friendſhip.

I had undergone too much agitation to attempt to write that day; and deferred, therefore, till the next, a letter of acknowledgment to my generous mother:—but, alas! my appointed hour was come!—I was taken ill before this taſk of duty

was performed! — For ſeveral days my life was deſpaired of; during which interval I was totally inſenſible to all around me. — Upon the return of recollection I perceived Janetton watching by my bedſide; — I feebly drew aſide the curtain, through which I had diſcovered her ſhadow; and my longing eye ſought in vain for the ſweet reward of all my anguiſh. — With difficulty I uttered, "Where, where, is "my child?" — Janetton looked diſtreſſed, put her finger to her mouth, and endeavoured to compoſe me; obſerving, at the ſame time, an apparent intention not to anſwer: but, upon my repeating the queſtion with viſible inquie-

tude—"Huſh, Madam!" ſaid ſhe, in a low voice, "be ſilent, and do "not agitate yourſelf."—She officiouſly brought me a cordial, which I patiently ſwallowed; and, ringing a bell, Nanette appeared.—The mother, for an inſtant, forgot her own advice, and ſhouted out—"A miracle!—A miracle!—Ma-"dame's ſenſes are reſtored!"—I looked wiſhfully at Nanette; and, ſuppoſing ſhe came from the adjacent nurſery, I entreated her, in a whiſper, to bring my infant, adding that the ſight of ſuch a treaſure would be the moſt effectual reſtorative they could adminiſter:—I paufed, and liſtened with anxious ears if I could catch the plaintive ſounds

founds of thofe endearing cries which cling round the fond mother's heart — but hearing none — "It fleeps," I cried, — "my "cherub fleeps! — Oh! guardian "angels, watch its flumbers!" — They looked at each other, then at me, and continued filent. — "Well," faid I, endeavouring to rife in my bed, — "if you are "cruel enough to keep it from "my fight, I will feek for it my- "felf at the peril of my life.—I attempted, indeed, to rife, but funk down again upon my pillow from total weaknefs: however, I affumed ftrength enough to fay, in a refolute tone, that I infifted upon being obeyed.—They then whifpered to-

 gether,

gether, and, by degrees, at length informed me (what I began to suſpect) that my unfortunate ſon ſurvived his birth but a few hours!—Though I ſenſibly felt this additional ſtroke of fate, yet the weakneſs of my frame prevented my expreſſing any outrageous grief!—I raiſed my languid eyes to heaven, and ſilently ſubmitted to its decrees. — By ſlow advances I gradually mended—my youth and conſtitution repulſed the complicated force of bodily malady and mental anguiſh; and I lived to encounter and ſurvive greater evils than I had yet experienced!

I firſt employed my returning ſtrength to write a letter, fraught with



with duty, penitence, and grati-tude, to my mother. It ſenſibly wounded me to name the man ſtill too dear to my affections with re-proach;—but, as I was conſcious that the tongue of fame would, even were I ſilent on the ſubject, proclaim my injuries, I informed her that my diſobedience had been amply revenged in the inconſtancy of a huſband—and once more im-plored her to permit an unfortunate and contrite daughter to ſue for par-don at her honoured feet!—Several times, during my confinement, I had anxiouſly inquired for my poor Jaquelin; and, after repeated evaſions, was grieved by the intel-ligence that the good creature had,

in an expedition to Paris on horſe-back, fallen from his horſe, and diſlocated his leg; but that, by the humanity of Mademoiſelle de St. Aubin, at whoſe houſe he was attended by an eminent ſurgeon, he was likely to do well.—If Jaquelin had been my parent I could ſcarce have felt more than I did on his account; and I entreated that, when he could be moved with ſafety, he might be tranſported in a horſe-litter to Belle-vue.

As ſoon as I was ſufficiently recovered to venture into the air, I inſiſted upon being directed to the ſpot which contained the relics of my departed ſon.—In a wilderneſs of ſhrubs I diſcovered his little

grave!—

grave! — here every emotion of maternal tendernefs agonized my heart! — As I was totally infenfible from the hour of his birth, and he had been depofited in the ground before I was reftored to recollection, I now, for the firft time, approached my child!—Ah! how approached him! — not with the tranfports of a happy mother, who preffes to clafp to her fond bofom the blooming pledge of hymeneal love! — Exchanged for the foft cradle of repofing infancy—was the cold bed of death! — the promifed comfort of my future days wrapped in eternal fleep! — Sweet babe!— thou never kneweft a parent!— thy ill-fated birth was but the paff-

port

port to an early tomb!—Had heaven, in pity for thy wretched mother, permitted her to lay her burthen down, and ſhare thy grave, the bleſſing would have been a compenſation for her ſorrows.—The outcaſt daughter—the childleſs mother—and the widowed wife—had been at reſt, and all her woes forgotten!—but juſtice ſuffers not rewards of guilt!—The ungrateful fugitive, who had plunged a dagger in the boſom of thoſe who gave her being, was decreed to feel maternal anguiſh; and where ſhe inflicted the wound herſelf to bleed!

When I had relieved the oppreſſion of my heart by torrents of aſ-

fifting tears, I quitted the dear fpot which contained my lifelefs treafure : — here I made each morn a fadly foothing vifit — here daily paid the tributary debt of Nature's grief — till a calm and gentle melancholy fucceeded the violence of recent forrow. I anxioufly waited the return of Jaquelin, to whofe honeft hands I deftined an employment his zeal for my repofe I knew would execute with joy—it was to protect from the inclement fkies the repofitory of my loft hope! —there I meant to rear the eververdant laurel — the filver fir and lofty cedar : — thefe were to repel the winter's blaft; and fummer's zephyrs were to waft the fpicy

fweets

ſweets of intermingling flowers.—Pardon, Henrietta! — my deareſt, my ſole ſurviving friend !—pardon the wretch who fondly dwells upon the loved remembrance of her loſt child! —thou wilt one day feel a mother's tranſport! — Oh! mayeſt thou never know a mother's anguiſh! — thy ſpotleſs virtues will ſecure thoſe bleſſings which retribution's juſtice granted to me alone for puniſhments!

I now began to deſpair of ever beholding again my ſtill, ſtill dear inconſtant !—yet found myſelf but ill prepared for the fatal blow impending on my head!—I was muſing at a window upon my misfortunes, when Le Claire, the valet

of

of Monſieur de St. Aubin, galloped up to the gate!—my eyes had only power to ſeek in vain one flattering inſtant for the loved cauſe of all my ſorrows!—they grew dim!—my ſenſes failed me!—and I ſunk upon the floor;—when I recovered, I found Janetton and Nanette buſily occupied in reſtoring me to life—I puſhed them from me, and called aloud for Le Claire—he ruſhed into my preſence—"Tell "me—tell me" exclaimed I—"where haſt thou left my huſ-"band?"—he bowed reſpectfully, looked diſtreſſed, and was ſilent—"Oh", cried I, franticly claſping my hands—"in pity to a wretch, "confeſs what led thee hither!—

"fear

" fear not to impart thy embaſſy— " does thy inhuman maſter deſtine " me new inſults !"—" Ah, Ma- " dam ! my maſter !"—replied he mournfully — " he is incapable " of offending more — Mademoi- " ſelle de St. Aubin commanded me " to come—reluctantly I obeyed— " my reſpect, my gratitude, re- " coiled at the idea of adding to " ſuch ſorrows !"—"How," cried I, — " is not that cruel woman yet " weary of perſecuting an unhappy " wife through her arts—forſaken " by the man who ſhould be her " protector !

" What freſh inſtance of a huſ- " band's perfidy does her barbarity " prepare for me !" — " Alas !" — replied

replied Le Claire — " you have " nothing more to ſuffer from my " unfortunate, miſguided maſter! " — he has made a fatal atonement " for all his errors!"

" Gracious God!" — exclaimed I — while a thrilling horrour ran through my veins — " what " dreadful tale haſt thou to tell, " and I to hear!—my prophetic " fears pronounce that I have no " more a huſband!"

He ſhook his head, turned away his eyes, which gave teſtimony to his feelings—but anſwered not!— I ſunk upon my knees; and every tender ſentiment, which in the dawn of love had attached my ſoul, ruſhed into my boſom with redoubled

redoubled force.—“ Oh ! St. Au-
“ bin !—my adored St. Aubin !”—
I cried, “ then thou art gone for
“ ever !— never till this moment
“ was Adelaide irreparably — truly
“ wretched ! —not even thy incon-
“ ſtancy could efface my love !—
“ Amidſt my ſorrows I cheriſhed
“ ſtill the dear remembrance of thy
“ former kindneſs — the ſoothing
“ hope of thy reſtored affections !
“ —Oh! that I had died with thee!
“ —one grave would have united
“ us ; and thou couldeſt not have
“ eſcaped me beyond the cold con-
“ fines of the tomb !”

Thus did I rave on —nor did I ſhed one tear.—To move me, Le Claire began the ſubject of his death —I ſat motionleſs upon the ſeat, to which

which they had raiſed me; and, notwithſtanding my agony of mind, I heard diſtinctly every word he uttered. — He informed me that his maſter, having accompanied Madame de Miran to Florence, had by various attachments awakened the jealouſy of my rival — that, in particular, a beautiful Italian, named Seraphina, had inſpired him with admiration; but that ſtill he neglected not Madame de Miran, at whoſe palace he reſided in great ſplendour — but one day having, by her emiſſaries, gained private intelligence of an aſſignation with Seraphina, Madame de Miran found means to inſpire her new rival with ſo ſtrong a ſuſpi-

cion of his falsehood, that, in the extravagant height of jealous fury, she infused a deadly poison into some lemonade which was presented to her lover, and which, in a few hours, terminated his life in strong convulsions.—Seraphina repented, too late, her barbarous revenge, and absconded to a convent before the event was made public.—Le Claire attended his expiring master in his last moments, who expressed, in some of his short intervals of speech, the tenderest remorse for me!—"Oh, "my Adelaide! my injured wife!" he cried, "may my death expiate "my crimes recommend the an- "gel

" gel ſufferer to my father! — if
" there yet exiſts a pledge of our
" unfortunate union, may the child
" recompenſe the mother's wrongs!
" —Oh, Adelaide!—had I ſooner
" become ſenſible of thy virtues
" we had both been happy!

" Amelia, that cruel ſiſter, has
" undone me! — like a dark fiend
" ſhe ſeduced my weak unguarded
" heart to the falſe pleaſures of al-
" luring vice;—whilſt thou, bright
" ſeraph, robed in innocence, and
" blooming with matchleſs beauty,
" ſtretched in vain thy lovely hand
" to ſave me! — Had fate permit-
" ed me extent of life, thou wouldſt
" have beheld low at thy feet a
" ſuppliant lover and repentant

" husband — but, doomed to fall " the victim of my crimes, the " exstatic bliss of thy pronounced " forgiveness is denied even in the " decisive hour of death! — The " music of thy voice would have " allayed the pang of anguish, and " soothed the horrors of a dying " moment—Bless her, oh gracious " heaven! and receive into thy " mercy the deluded soul who, " with fervent penitence, implores " thy pardon!" — He spoke — he sighed — he died! — Le Claire quitted not the remains of his loved master till he saw them deposited in hallowed earth. Madame de Miran, in the agonies of despair at his loss, had caused his funeral obsequies

obſequies to be performed with ſolemn pomp; and had abſolutely refuſed her permiſſion for his body to be removed to France. When Le Claire dwelt upon the tender ſubject of St. Aubin's affecting ſenſibility for me, the torrent of my tears guſhed out — they afforded me a temporary relief, and enabled me to aſk him if he had unfolded this ſad event by the command of Amelia? — He anſwered in the affirmative; and that, having peremptorily denied his humble requeſt—that ſhe would ſpare him a commiſſion, for which he was ill qualified—and urged her in vain to break it cautiouſly, either by her preſence or her pen, ſhe had im-

pofed on him the painful tafk, and charged him with this additional information, which the poor man uttered reluctantly — that, as I had by my wayward humours banifhed her brother from his native country, and had confequently been the caufe of his miferable and fhameful death, I had no longer any right to claim protection from the Vifcount de St. Aubin. That our alliance was now diffolved, and he expected me to quit, in a few days, a refidence I had enjoyed already unmolefted but too long: and that fhe did not doubt but my parents would generoufly provide for their widowed runaway,

fince

ſince the cauſe of her diſobedience, having become the victim of my imprudence, was now no more. — "Yes," cried I, animated with indignation, "voluntarily ſhall I reſign a dependence "to which I would prefer the moſt "ſavage deſert. — Tell this implacable, this inhuman ſiſter, that, "ſenſible it is to her I owe all my "miſeries, I attribute to her malice the inconſtancy of my wronged huſband, and his fatal end! — "Tell her that beggary is preferable to her aſſiſtance; and that, "though my juſtly offended parents were to carry their reſentment beyond his grave to the "widow of St. Aubin, and ſhould

" ſpurn their wretched daughter
" from their feet, ſhe would ſink
" a prey to poverty and want, ra-
" ther than accept from her hands
" the ſmalleſt pittance to allay her
" hunger."

Though the diſtraction of my mind was little calculated to expreſs my ſentiments on paper, yet I conſidered that my duty demanded my giving immediate information to my mother of my preſent unfortunate ſituation, conjuring her to plead for her wretched daughter; and preſuming to hope that, ſince thoſe ties were fatally broken which had juſtly occaſioned the reſentment of my parents, I might be bleſſed with their forgiveneſs ere

I ſunk

I ſunk down in ſorrow to the grave! Intruſting my letter to the conveyance of Le Claire, I waited the event of this laſt effort with unutterable anguiſh!—I attempted not to go to bed, but aſſiſted my two attendants in packing up my apparel ready for a final removal from Belle-vue, where I determined not to remain another day, whatever were the conſequences. The inſulting commands of Amelia, to reſign a habitation to which the unhappy widow of her brother was ſurely no leſs entitled than his forſaken wife, had rouſed my pride and indignation, ſentiments which no doubt prevented my wounded

ſpirit

ſpirit from yielding to the oppreſ-ſive weight of accumulated woe!

Le Claire returned not till near four in the morning, as he found, on his arrival in Paris, my father's houſe ſhut up; and received information that the family had reſided for ſome months entirely in the country. Having obtained a direction to their abode, he loſt no time in purſuing a journey of ſo much conſequence to me; and had the ſatisfaction of bringing me a letter, which he hoped would prove a conſolation to my diſtreſs. I thanked and rewarded my faithful meſſenger for his diligence:—taking, with trembling hands, this dreaded

dreaded letter, I found the welcome, unhoped-for offer of an aſylum under my parental roof, upon condition that I reſumed the name of Tourville, and reſigned all future acquaintance with St. Aubin's family. — The latter was an injunction I had no temptation to reſiſt—the former was a circumſtance too indifferent to me to refuſe. The next day their carriage drove to the door, and I quitted a manſion where I had paſſed the happieſt and moſt wretched of my days. One tie alone attached my lingering heart to Belle-vue — I could not, without regret, for ever leave the remains of my loſt child! I ſhed my laſt tear upon his grave, and

and tore myſelf eternally from an object which, while it fed my ſorrows, ſoothed their anguiſh.—My mother received me with encircling arms; —ſhe led me trembling into the preſence of my father—I ſunk at his feet, not daring to lift up my eyes to meet his awful frown—"Oh, forgive! forgive!" was all I could articulate.—He deigned to raiſe me with relenting kindneſs—"Thy misfortunes, and thy repentance, Adelaide," ſaid he, "have expiated thy fault:—thou art forgiven!"—I kiſſed with tranſport his extended hand—"Ah," cried my mother, "how ſhe is changed! her emaciated form ſcarce bears the ſemblance of her former ſelf. —Come,

"—Come, my poor child, and let "the balm of comfort once more "revisit thy much injured heart! "the story of thy wrongs are all "confirmed in those sunk eyes, "and that wan cheek!"—She folded me in her maternal arms, and wiped the tears that in abundance rolled.—To this dear parent I unbosomed all my griefs—sweet pity melted in her gentle heart!—but soon she taught me, from the mild reasoning of true religion, that resignation to the will of heaven, from which the inexperienced ear of youth too often turns.

I now hoped to have devoted my remaining days to watch, with duteous care, the declining years of

of thofe beloved parents, whofe tender affection for their erring child feemed to bury in oblivion all the fatal paft!—I flattered myfelf my filial attentions might in fome degree compenfate for the difappointment I had caufed them —but alas!—the meafure of my misfortunes was yet to be completed!—too foon the moft painful tafk of duty claimed my care!—to fmooth the bed of ficknefs—to alleviate the pang of death!—thefe were the mournful offices which fucceeded a hufband's murder!—my father was feized with a malady, which baffled all the power of medicine—it threatened immediate diffolution, and prepared my exemplary

exemplary mother for an eternal ſeparation!—My terrors upon the proſpect of an event too certain, from the rapid progreſs of this diſorder, ſuperſeded even the anxious fears I had ſecretly indulged upon her account.—The ſymptoms of a decaying conſtitution made me anticipate, with dread, a mother's fate:—but my father's ſudden and nearer danger engroſſed every fear and every care for him!—I never quitted this dear, this dying parent—but watched conſtantly by his bed-ſide, ſilently invoking heaven with fervent prayers to ſpare his valued life.—I adminiſtered every remedy during the ſhort abſences of my mother, which

which he received from my hands with looks of ſpeechleſs gratitude —I had juſt aſſiſted him to change the poſture of his reſtleſs head—he gazed upon me with expreſſive tenderneſs — he preſſed me with his clay-cold hand—and in an inſtant breathed within my arms his laſt expiring ſigh!——

At this awful moment my burſting ſoul ſeemed ready to break through the limits of mortality, and, quivering on the wings of life, to take its flight with his who gave me being! — but the recollection of a remaining claim upon my duty baniſhed the impious wiſh.

I ſought my widowed mother in an adjoining room, whither ſhe had

had not been long retired before the partner of her heart was ſunk to final ſleep :—ſhe was reſting on her knees, her eyes were raiſed to heaven !—but her whole mind, animated by devotion, ſpoke in her countenance. — I was ſilent, not daring to interrupt her ſacred meditation ! — at length, ſuddenly turning towards me, as I ſtood weeping by, ſhe aroſe ; and, tenderly wiping my trickling tears—
" I read, my child, in your affliction," ſaid ſhe, aſſuming a firmneſs of voice—" that hope is now
" no more — thou haſt cloſed a
" father's eyes. Alas, my Adelaide !
" — how enviable the fate we
" mourn,—the dead are happy—

" the living only wretched! — I " have prayed for resignation ; and, " I thank heaven, I feel at this " moment its gracious support— " soon, very soon, we shall be re- " united — what rapture in the " thought, were it not for the " sad reflection that thou must be " left an unprotected orphan in a " barbarous world! — but, my be- " loved daughter," looking sted- fastly at me with a penetrating eye, — " let religion be thy guide, " thy monitor, thy friend — and " thou wilt never miss the empty " shade of friendship."

I could only answer with my tears — she strained me to her arms, and thus continued — " for- " bear, my child, to move me —

" my

"my resolution shakes — I must "withdraw a little to confirm my "strength of mind, but will rejoin "you soon, my love!"— So saying, this incomparable woman, recommending me tenderly to the care of a faithful and favourite domestic, who had been my nurse, and ordering not to be interrupted unless she rang her bell, retired to her closet, where she continued some hours.—As she had taken no refreshment since the morning, I began to be anxious when the hour of seven struck—I ventured to approach the door, notwithstanding her prohibition, and gently rapt—she opened it herself — her face was pale, her voice was languid;

guid;—but ſhe endeavoured to aſſume a cheerful aſpect. — Ninon followed me with a bouillon; ſhe ſwallowed it in compliance with my entreaties; but aſſured me, preſſing my hand, that ſhe found herſelf drowſy, and the compoſure of ſleep was all ſhe wanted.—I urged her to go to bed; but ſhe preferred reſting on a couch in her cloſet—we aſſiſted her in reclining upon it; and, in oppoſition to her entreaties that I would leave her, I placed myſelf at her feet to watch her ſlumbers—ſhe raiſed her head from the pillow, fixed upon me a heavenly animated ſmile, which I never ſhall forget — and ſunk into a gentle ſleep.—I contemplated the

ſweet

ſweet ſerenity of her countenance till the ſhades of night obſcured her from my view — Ninon was approaching with a light, but I waved my hand, and pointed to her to place it in the antichamber. —Another hour I watched, till two or three deep ſighs made me fear ſhe ſlept uneaſy; I fetched the candle; and, putting it on a cabinet, made a gentle effort to turn her; her hands were cold and clammy, and big drops of water ran down her face;—terrified, I ſcreamed — Ninon flew from the adjoining room — the good Ninon, who inſtantly diſcovered the fatal truth, attempted to pour a cordial into her mouth, but ineffectually! —

her jaw was fixed, and her eyes closed for ever!—Now was my misery complete! and one fatal day deprived me of those dear protectors I had so late regained!—I continued some days in a state of stupefaction — nor could all the affectionate zeal of my poor Ninon dissipate my grief.—The arrival of Monsieur de Tourville, the nephew of my father, roused me from this lethargy of woe—I could not refuse to see him; he was appointed sole executor; and from him I was obliged to learn the decision of the will. I found my unfortunate marriage had entirely altered my father's plan in regard to the disposition of his fortune:—but he bequeathed

bequeathed every thing to me, on condition that I accepted the hand of his nephew — otherwise, I was only entitled to a third of his money: the remainder, with his estates, devolved to Monsieur de Tourville, in case of my refusal. I need not mention this was the destined husband of my father's choice—Had my dear parents survived my term of mourning, it was no doubt their intention to present again this long-selected lover to my acceptance; but their tender consideration for a grief, which, though I never ventured to express, was yet visible in my countenance, prompted them to forbear

touching on a ſubject which muſt wound a yet bleeding heart.

My couſin was a man of figure and addreſs; and ſeemed little prepared for the indignity of a ſecond rejection. However, as I had unalterably determined never again to yield my widowed hand, I heſitated not to aſſure him, that though I eſteemed his character, and revered my father's choice, yet, from an inviolable attachment to the memory of my huſband, I never could enter into a ſecond engagement; adding, that I voluntarily ſubmitted to the reſignation of a forfeit fortune; wiſhing him with another that happineſs which it was not in the power of a broken heart

to

to beſtow! — The unconditional money I found myſelf intitled to was amply ſufficient to procure me every elegance of life, were I capable, in the dejected ſtate of my mind, to enjoy affluence; and I murmured not at a deciſion which my breach of duty had fully juſtified.—My ſpirits, ſubdued by repeated misfortunes, ſought ſhelter from the world in retirement and devotion.

Pardon me if I have dwelt too minutely on a detail you exacted from me. — The recital of calamities, ſo recently endured, have inadvertently flowed from the pen of ſorrow.

Thus,

Thus, my beloved Henrietta, have I revealed each circumstance of my yet short life; and proved, by my fatal experience, the punishments that wait on filial disobedience!—Your affection alone is left to attach me to the world.—Disappointed in the tenderest love—torn from the assiduities of duty,—what tie but that of friendship yet remains!—If, after a tale of woe like mine, you can propose any pleasure in the society of its unfortunate heroine, I will consent to forsake for you a seclusion which, when I entered, I never meant to quit.—But spare me, my Henrietta, the pang of witnessing those solemn rites which would recall a day

day to my remembrance I would for ever banish from my thoughts—I will obey the first summons that proclaims you a happy wife.—On my devoted head may every misery, resulting from an ill-fated marriage, have justly been exhausted.

On your propitious hymen may smiling peace, domestic harmony, and mutual love, for ever wait; and time alone dissolve the tender union!

Such are the wishes—such the ardent prayers of

The unfortunate,

But faithful,

ADELAIDE.

When Madame de St. Aubin, whom we ſhall hereafter diſtinguiſh by that name, which ſhe now reſumed, had made the Marchioneſs partaker of this intereſting diſcovery, ſhe requeſted permiſſion to preſent Auguſtus in his new character. — Julia bluſhed, from the recollection of their laſt interview, but could not refuſe admittance to the ſon of her beloved friend! — ſhe approached her with trembling awe; — but ſhe ſealed his pardon with ſo ſweet a ſmile, and congratulated him upon the denouëment of his birth with ſuch unaffected pleaſure, that he felt reſtored to new life. — Not ſo the young Viſcounteſs — ſhe received the information

formation with a ſecret mortifica-
tion—her antipathy to Madame de
Tourville predominated over the
pride of rank on the occaſion.—
The conſcious hauteur and arrogant
contempt ſhe had ſhewn for her
opinion could not reconcile her to
the reſpect that was due to the
mother of her huſband.—She re-
turned a cold ſalute for her mater-
nal embrace; and, with a reſerved
formality, felicitated the new Viſ-
count de St. Aubin. — Auguſtus
approached Leonora with an air
of tender ſatisfaction, and aſſured
her that his happineſs, upon ſo
flattering a diſcovery, derived its
ſource from the affections of his
heart, ſince it had given to him
the

the most amiable of mothers, and restored that rank to a lovely wife which the late uncertainty of his descent had cruelly obscured.—With a satyrical smile she answered—"That your dubious birth is "thus decided with the array of "exterior honours—I rejoice for "your own sake—it was otherwise "totally indifferent to the daughter "of the Baron de Neuville, who, "reflecting splendour by her own "alliance, could not be herself de- "graded."—With this equivocal reply she turned haughtily away, and retired from the joyous buz of gratulations in which her inconstant heart bore so little share.—The Marquis, the Marchioness, and their

their brother, offered their compliments on the occaſion with well-counterfeited ſatisfaction; but Monſieur and Madame de Senanges ſympathized in this event with all the natural warmth of undiſſembled friendſhip.

As the next day was to be the day of general ſeparation, the lovely widow, whoſe every action was regulated by the moſt ſcrupulous and delicate propriety, had predetermined to pay her ſons the reſpect of appearing at the table, and to paſs the laſt evening in the public ſociety of her friends.—The intereſting event which had opened to her beloved Tourville a ſcene of preſent rapture and future compen-

ſation

ſation for a life of ſorrow, by the unhoped-for reſtoration of a long-loſt ſon, gave to her depreſſed heart a ray of ſoothing pleaſure, and ſhe joined the aſſembly in the ſaloon with an air of contentment, if not of happineſs.—She entered with that unaſſuming, natural dignity, which was inſeparable from her every movement; and advanced to meet the Marchioneſs, with whom the preſent was the firſt interview.—This haughty woman was prepared to view her with the arrogance of rival charms and jealous conſequence;—but the ſweet ſmile that beamed benignant in the eyes of Julia, and animated the magic graces of her features, had the

wondrous

wondrous power to ſubdue, by a momentary impulſe of conſcious inferiority, that vain pride which ſwelled her heart:—But envy ſoon diſpelled the tranſient virtue—and Julia's beauty, too radiant for the eye of malice, effaced the impreſſion that her condeſcenſion had made.

When ſhe approached the young Viſcounteſs with her congratulations ſhe affectionately embraced her—"Joy to my Leonora," ſhe ſoftly ſaid:—"may the event of "this intereſting day be a prelude "to future added bleſſings—and "may Madame de St. Aubin, as ſhe "is the loveliest, be long the hap"pieſt of wives!"——

Leonora, from the conſcious reproaches of her own ungrateful mind, looked evidently abaſhed—ſhe bluſhed her thanks, and turned from the Marchioneſs with embarraſſed precipitation.—The anxious mother of Auguſtus, drawing him apart to have a ſhort conference with him previous to the hour of general meeting, mildly remonſtrated with him upon his neglects towards his fair wife:—"Think "not, my ſon," ſaid ſhe, "that "I mean to uſurp, from parental "privilege, controul over your ac-"tions:—hear me not as a mo-"ther, but the tendereſt friend:—"one who would guide you through

"the

" the intricate path obſcured by
" guilty paſſion!—Let not the un-
" fortunate prepoſſeſſion of your
" heart influence you to treat Leo-
" nora with cruel diſregard—you
" received her from the hand of a
" doating father—he repoſed in
" you implicit confidence—he re-
" ſigned to you his deareſt trea-
" ſure!—be faithful to the truſt!—
" beware of ſetting her an example
" of indifference, which, in wound-
" ing her tenderneſs, may betray
" her into ſome fatal weakneſs!—
" Let your ſtrict adherence to the
" ſolemn vows which joined you
" at the altar preſerve her faith
" inviolate!—let her find in her
" huſband the protector of her in-

" nocence — the guardian of her
" honour!"—She paused—" I bow
" to your merited rebukes," replied
Auguſtus, " conſcious of my er-
" ror. — Yes, Madam, my heart,
" enſlaved even to faſcination by
" one too lovely object, has forgot
" the duties which engaged him in
" a voluntary union to another. —
" The mind which derives from
" you its being ſhall learn to emu-
" late your virtues. — From Ade-
" laide's unprecedented wrongs her
" ſon ſhall learn the juſtice due to
" Leonora. — My future conduct
" ſhall atone my fault; and though
" my affections are irrevocably fix-
" ed, never will they tempt me to
" betray the vow which honour
" renders

" renders binding.—Oh, my ſweet " monitreſs!" raiſing to his lips Madame de St. Aubin's hand, " never can my mother plead in " vain!"—She ſmiled upon Auguſtus with fond delight, while the tear of pleaſure trickled from her eye.—With theſe tender impreſſions he followed her into the ſaloon.

The etiquette of the ſeparate routes which the parting families were to take had been previouſly ſettled—Monſieur and Madame de St. Aubin were to return to the Baron de Neuville's, when the Marchioneſs and their mother accompanied the Count and Counteſs to Senanges.

Auguſtus ſecretly rejoiced in his approaching departure, as the vicinity of the Baron's manſion to that of the Count would give him frequent opportunities of beholding his adored Julia; but Leonora, with regret, quitted a ſpot which, from the dangerous preſence of Henry de Soiſſons, was become too intereſting — ſhe dreaded to encounter the penetrating eye of a father whoſe virtuous precepts, the fatal principles ſhe had now imbibed, taught her to conſider as the ſevere reſtrictions of rigorous age.

The new Marchioneſs and the ill-judging Leonora attempted not to conceal the mutual reluctance with which they parted; but openly

lamented

lamented that the dull forms of duty which recalled the latter to her father obliged them to submit to a temporary separation.—And, without even referring to the opinion of Augustus, she promised to join the Marchioness at Paris the moment she could release herself from parental bondage.—Monsieur de St. Aubin observed, with astonishment, an affectation of levity of which he had hitherto thought the innocent heart of Leonora incapable. At first he considered this newly-assumed character as an artful manoeuvre to recall his attentions. Conscious of having treated her with indifference he secretly reproached himself with his ingra-

titude to a wife who he imagined truly loved him; and determined to render himself more worthy her affections.—Little did he conceive the attachment ſhe had profeſſed for him capable of change; much leſs could he ſuſpect that ſhe had already transferred her inconſtant heart to his unworthy rival!—He took her tenderly by the hand— "Permit me to hope, my Leonora," ſaid he, "that there are ties even "ſtronger than parental ones; and "that, ſhould the converſe of a fa- "ther grow inſipid, the attentions "of a huſband may reſtore to ſoli- "tude its former charms."—With- drawing her hand with a haughty air, which ſhe changed into a ſmile, of

of contempt—"Perhaps, Sir," said she, "those attentions may be found "under the roof of the Baron de "Neuville, since they followed us "not to the Chateau de Soissons."—Monsieur de St. Aubin, struck with the justice of this rebuke, made no reply.—Julia, though unobserved, partook of his confusion; and too well convinced she had been herself the innocent but fatal cause of his indifference, felt upon her cheek a conscious glow, and in her eye a trembling tear!—She conceived that Leonora entertained a secret jealousy on her account—but it was a real misapprehension which the delicacy of her sentiments occasioned; the conduct of these unfortunate and virtuous

tuous lovers was too guarded to create even the ſhadow of ſuſpicion.

The Baron embraced his children at their return with tranſport.—He had conſtantly received immediate intimation of the minuteſt events relative to the diſcovery made by the late Marquis, who had honourably confided with the Baron, previous to their marriage, the important ſecret of his adopted ſon's myſterious birth.

An expreſs having informed Monſieur de Neuville the preceding day of the real name and deſcent of Auguſtus, he welcomed him moſt affectionately; rejoicing, for his ſake, that the cloud which had obſcured his fate ſome days was ſo happily diſperſed.

dispersed.—In vain the Viscount endeavoured, by tender and constant assiduities, to raise the drooping spirits of his wife—she received them with forbidding coldness, and even appeared disgusted by all his attempts to please her: his reign was past—his power no more!—the sudden impression to which her easy heart had yielded was quite extinguished by a stronger flame—that transient love which once she bore Augustus now warmed her bosom with a guilty passion!

The partial fondness of a father soon perceived this change in Leonora; with anxious sorrow he marked the settled gloom upon her brow;—that sweetness which once

gave

gave added graces to her beauty had yielded place to lowering discontent. The Baron strictly scrutinized the conduct of his son, and could find no source for her displeasure in the most unremitted attentions of a husband. — He reproved her one day for an alteration of humour so extraordinary and unreasonable — instead of the gentle timidity with which she was accustomed to receive his admonitions, she replied, with a spirit that astonished him, that she was of opinion the prerogative of a parent ceased when a husband's reign commenced; to whom alone she now considered herself accountable for any of her actions. — She quitted him at the

close

close of this ſpeech, and left the good old man in a conſternation not to be deſcribed ! — He ordered his carriage, after deliberating a few moments, and repaired to the Chateau de Senanges, where he requeſted a private interview with Madame de St. Aubin. With tears he lamented this ſudden and amazing alteration of temper in his daughter, whoſe mildneſs of diſpoſition, and dutiful affection for him, had formed the moſt amiable traits of her character.—Madame de St. Aubin confeſſed that ſhe had, with concern, made the ſame obſervation ; and attributed a deportment ſo different from her gentleneſs of nature to the unfortunate intimacy

intimacy ſhe had contracted with the new Marchioneſs de Soiſſons. She warned him by all means to ſtop in its infancy the progreſs of an acquaintance which had already proved its dangerous influence over the unguarded heart of unſuſpicious innocence. — The Baron returned home with a full reſolution to follow Madame de St. Aubin's advice, and to prohibit any further intercourſe with ſo deceitful a friend—but how was he chagrined to find that the young Viſcounteſs had been ſet out for Paris half an hour before his arrival, in compliance with the requeſt of the Marchioneſs de Soiſſons, who came herſelf to fetch her. He immediately

ately inquired whether Monsieur de St. Aubin had accompanied his daughter; but was informed that he was not yet returned from the chace, and that Madame was only attended by her woman and one domestic.

The Baron waited with impatience his son's return; who no sooner entered than he expressed his dissatisfaction at the conduct of Leonora. The Viscount, equally surprised and concerned at this extraordinary step, attempted to vindicate an action his heart totally disapproved:—but the Baron, too thoroughly exasperated against her, told him that, though in pleading for his wife he proved his affec-

tion

tion and tendernefs, yet regard for his own honour fhould urge him to exert a proper fpirit upon the occafion, and to forbid the imprudent continuance of a friendfhip already fo fatal in its effects. Monfieur de St. Aubin, convinced by thefe arguments, refolved to fet out the next morning to prevail upon Leonora to accompany him home. The Baron applauded his intention, and impatiently waited the expected return of his daughter. Monfieur de St. Aubin found his fair wife engaged in a crowd of company, who were fluttering round her toilet. The Chevalier de Soiffons was the envied man who feemed honoured with her moft peculiar no-

tice;

tice; he was breathing adulation in her ear, when Monſieur de St. Aubin, being announced, inſtantly entered her dreſſing-room. Her countenance, which had been animated with the pride of beauty and the homage of its votaries, now became tinged with the glow of indignation, and her brow lowered with the frown of reſentment. The Viſcount affected a gay unconcern, ſaluted the company with his accuſtomed eaſe, and preſented to Leonora a letter from her father.—She half peruſed it; then, toſſing it careleſsly upon the toilet, ſhe told her woman to put the dull epiſtle by; and that, if ever ſhe found her in a moralizing humour, ſhe might re-

mind her of the inſipid leſſon, when it would be more efficacious than at preſent: then turning to her lord — " I find," ſaid ſhe, " that " you have been perſuaded by the " Baron de Neuville to expect my " return with you: tell him that " when I am weary of the joys of " public life, I ſhall fly to the " aſylum he generouſly offers me; " but, that I am poſitively ſo " tired of ſylvan ſcenes and do- " meſtic circles, that I ſhall remain " at preſent where I am." — The Chevalier de Soiſſons thought propriety now required his abſence: and, bowing to the Viſcounteſs and Marchioneſs, he took his leave, with a conceited ſhrug of the ſhoulders,

ſhoulders, and a ſarcaſtic ſmile at the latter. His example was followed by the whole train of petit maitres, who formed this trifling group. — The Marchioneſs only remained—ſhe was departing; but a ſignificant nod from Leonora determined her to ſtay, even in defiance of the Viſcount's wiſh to be left alone with her friend, which he expreſſed by holding the door open in his hand for her to paſs. "See, Sir," ſaid Madame de St. Aubin, riſing and traverſing the room with agitation, "to what "your intruſion has expoſed me!— "you have ſucceeded in rendering "us both ridiculous: could no "other inſtant but the preſent have

" been favourable to the caprices
" of a father? How abſurd! to
" expect a young and married
" woman will ſubmit to the hu-
" mours of old age, and live im-
" mured in ſolitude, while youth,
" rank, and beauty, all combine
" to make the world delightful!—
" If you, Sir, have imbibed, from
" the Baron's arguments, ſuch ob-
" ſolete unnatural maxims, you
" will find yourſelf deceived and
" diſappointed; ſince I am reſolved
" to retrieve loſt pleaſures by
" partaking amply of every amuſe-
" ment from which I have hi-
" therto been ſecluded."—" In-
" deed," cried the Marchioneſs,
" it is high time Madame de St.

" Aubin

" Aubin ſhould be allowed a choice
" of her own; and ſhe cannot
" confer on me a greater obligation
" than by permitting me to intro-
" duce ſuch an ornament to the
" world."— " Madam," interrupt-
ed Auguſtus, " were the Viſcounteſs
" de St. Aubin of a birth and rank
" ſo obſcure as to require the coun-
" tenance of a lady who claims
" only from her title an imaginary
" equality with herſelf, then an in-
" troduction, even under the ſhadow
" of ſuch a wing, might reflect a
" ſuperficial honour. — But ſince
" Leonora de Neuville claims, by
" the blood from which ſhe ſprings,
" a reception in the moſt diſtin-
" guiſhed circles of the great,

" ſhe needs no borrowed luſtre."— The rage of the Marchioneſs was too great for utterance — it ſpoke only in the vivid lightning of her eyes.—Auguſtus, turning to Leonora, thus proceeded : — " If you " have a wiſh to make ſome reſi" dence in Paris, ſuffer me to pre" pare a ſituation more eligible in " a habitation of your own : — re" turn only with me to an expect" ing father, and you ſhall com" mand my actions and my for" tune." — " No, Sir," replied Madame de St. Aubin with indignation, " I am reſolutely deter" mined not to quit this houſe till " you have provided a manſion fit " for my reception.—The friend-

" ſhip

" ſhip of Madame de Soiſſons will
" more than compenſate the unrea-
" ſonable diſpleaſure of a father.—
" Farewell, Sir; the Marchioneſs's
" carriage waits; we are engaged—
" excuſe my abrupt departure."—
She turned from him with an air of compoſed haughtineſs; and St. Aubin was ſo aſtoniſhed and confounded at her ſtubborn reſiſtance, that he permitted her to lead, and her companion to follow, without interruption: he therefore threw himſelf into his chariot, and returned overwhelmed with diſappointment to the retreat of the Baron, who, attracted by the rapid ſound of wheels, was looking from a window. — Unprepared for the

abſolute refuſal of his daughter, he had formed his naturally placid countenance into an awful frown to meet the beauteous fugitive: it was not diſpelled upon the Viſcount's informing him in the ſofteſt terms that he found Leonora ſo very anxious to continue a few days in Paris; he could not reſiſt her entreaties. The Baron ſhook his head — "Auguſtus," ſaid he, "you will repent this weakneſs; "ſhe impoſes on your eaſy nature, "and triumphs in her power;—but "believe me, in yielding againſt "your judgment to the extrava-"gant wiſhes of a wife, you hoard "up a future fund of wretchedneſs "for both!—Yet, if no perſuaſion

"will

"will prevail upon the refractory
"girl to return without abſolute
"compulſion to this tranquil ſcene,
"I cannot ſee her innocence be-
"come the prey of ſo vitiated a
"woman as the Marchioneſs.—I
"will myſelf accompany you to
"Paris, when a houſe is procured
"fit for our reception.—Let us
"haſten, my ſon, to protect her
"virtue from the wily ſnares of
"vice, diſguiſed under the maſk
"of pleaſure, and ſnatch her from
"deſtruction!"—The Viſcount bowed a ſilent aſſent; the habitation of the Baron had charms for him, which he could not think of reſigning without regret; yet his reaſon could not but approve of the

friendſhip of the artful Marchioneſs.—Auguſtus heard, with an irreſiſtible pleaſure, that the object of his adoration was to be reſident in Paris, during his attendance there upon his wife; and that, under pretence of paying his duty to his mother, he might ſometimes be admitted into the preſence of his Julia. — In a week the Baron's hôtel was in readineſs for his reception, when, accompanied by the Viſcount, he ſet out for Paris; where, upon his arrival, he ſent an immediate ſummons for Leonora, who was engaged in a large party to the theatre that evening. Provoked and mortified at an event for which ſhe was yet unprepared, ſhe

ſhe diſpatched a meſſage to her father, informing him that her avocations that day were ſo numerous ſhe found it impoſſible to obey his commands till the afternoon, when ſhe would not fail to pay her duty in her way to the new comedy.—The rage of the Baron is not to be deſcribed—his firſt impulſe tempted him to fly inſtantly to the hôtel de Soiſſons, to load her with reproaches, and to inſiſt upon her immediate return with him.

But the perſuaſions of Auguſtus (who by this time knew too well the irritating temper of his wife), prevailed upon him to wait with patience for her voluntary arrival.

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—At length ſhe was announced, preceded by the Marchioneſs, without whoſe attendance, notwithſtanding her acquired ſpirit, ſhe wanted the courage to appear before her offended father.—She endeavoured to aſſume an air of confidence; but, in ſpite of her effrontery, the dreaded preſence of her venerable parent awed her tongue to ſilence. The Baron ſcarcely deigned a bow to her haughty and intruding companion; but, ſlowly approaching Leonora, he ſtood ſome minutes fixed in the ſorrowful contemplation of her figure:—ſhe had put off her mourning for the Marquis de Soiſſons (though Auguſtus ſtill wore the

the emblems of that grief his heart so truly felt) and sparkled in jewels, with every studied decoration of finished dress.

When the Baron had silently surveyed Madame de St. Aubin, who affected an air of ease and unconcern; overcome by the mingled emotions of grief, affection, and regret, he melted into tears.—"Alas! my misguided child!" he cried in broken accents, "could "I have once conceived that the "vanities of a false world would "have allured thee from a father, "and robbed me of my daugh- "ter?—Return, return to the "safe track of innocence from "which thy erring steps would

"lead

" lead thee—quit, quit the paths
" of fatal diſſipation which thou
" wilt find, too ſoon, are ſown with
" real thorns.—I have reſigned
" thee to the protection of a vir-
" tuous huſband—with him thou
" mayeſt ſecurely tread the walk of
" public life, ſpotleſs thy honour,
" unimpeached thy fame.—Can
" Leonora wiſh for any guide but
" her Auguſtus?—" If, Sir," replied
ſhe, reddening, " you allude to the
" preference I have diſcovered for
" the Marchioneſs de Soiſſons, I
" muſt be under the neceſſity of
" declaring ſolemnly that no in-
" fluence whatever is ſtrong enough
" to diſſolve a friendſhip immove-
" able as fate!—My obligations are
" inexpreſſible

" expreſſible—but for her I might
" have ſtill continued buried in
" oblivion, concealed in ſolitude,
" and been denied the liberty which
" free-born Nature claims.

" Releaſed from the long cap-
" tivity of childhood, I am deter-
" mined to aſſert the prerogative of
" every wife, and to enjoy, unre-
" ſtrained, the freedom to which
" I am entitled."

" Heaven forbid," interrupted Monſieur de St. Aubin, taking her by the hand, which ſhe ſuddenly withdrew, " that my Leo-
" nora ſhould find any unjuſtifiable
" oppoſition to her pleaſures from
" the reſtraints of a huſband who
" is anxious to anticipate the wiſhes

" of her heart; and, in return for " his attention, every mark of grate- " ful duty to the moſt amiable, moſt " generous of fathers, will be his " beſt, his deareſt recompenſe.— " The Baron de Neuville, far from " obſtructing your introduction to " the world, is ſtudying to pro- " mote it with propriety — this " houſe is prepared for you — he " makes you miſtreſs of it. — " The Counteſs de Senanges will " ſoon arrive in Paris; ſhe will be " happy to ſhare in your amuſe- " ments." — " Hold, Sir," exclaimed Madame de St. Aubin, " if I conſent to reſide here, in " compliance with the rules of de- " corum and propriety, it is not

" with

" with an intention of giving up
" thoſe parties and acquaintance
" which I prefer from choice.—
" Madame de Senanges is free to
" form her own ſelect ſociety—
" ſo am I:— nor ſhall I ſubmit to
" be dictated to, even by the Baron
" de Neuville!—But come, Ma-
" dame de Soiſſons," (turning to
her ſilent champion, who ſeemed
to enjoy, with a malicious pleaſure,
the miſchief ſhe had cauſed) " we
" ſhall be late—I muſt entreat
" your pardon for the liberty I
" have taken in detaining you with
" my family diſputes."—" Adieu,
" Sir," turning to her father, " to-
" morrow you may depend upon
" my acquieſcing with your wiſhes

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 " —I shall

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But the perſuaſions of Auguſtus (who by this time knew too well the irritating temper of his wife), prevailed upon him to wait with patience for her voluntary arrival.

—At

honour, he contented himſelf with being prepared to defend her innocence from any advantage which Monſieur de Soiſſons might preſume to hope from the aſſurance of his conqueſt. But he was anxiouſly ſolicitous to conceal this diſcovery from the knowledge of the Baron, who would have received the intelligence with all the horror of a Roman father. Nicely tenacious of his houſe's honour, Auguſtus was well convinced that Monſieur de Neuville would treat with implacable ſeverity his unfortunate daughter; and might poſſibly, by confining her cloſely in the country, render her deſperate. In a few days the Count and Coun-
teſs

teſs arrived at Paris, accompanied by the lovely widow and Madame de St. Aubin; the latter received an early viſit from the Baron, who informed her of the reſignation her ſon, with his approbation, had confirmed. She highly applauded a circumſtance which ſhe had herſelf moſt ardently wiſhed to take place, acquainting Monſieur de Neuville that ſhe had formed hopes of her ſon's alliance proving more worthy of his, by the acquiſition of a fortune to which he was the legal heir. She had made inquiries after Mademoiſelle de St. Aubin, who had ſucceeded on the deceaſe of her father to the whole eſtate and wealth of the late Viſcount; and, having

paſſed

passed in pleasure and dissipation a long term of years, she had lately retired, disgusted with the world, into a convent, to devote the remnant of her life to the duties of a religion whose precepts her whole conduct had openly disavowed. The rumours of Monsieur de St. Aubin's discovered birth, and of his mother's having again resumed that name, had spread through Paris; and there was no doubt but it would reach the ears of Amelia, which must prepare her for a claim that her much wronged sister was resolved to make. An unexpected opportunity soon offered itself for the execution of this just design—Madame de St. Aubin was informed

formed on evening that a woman wiſhed to ſpeak with her upon buſi- neſs of importance to her family. Upon requeſting her to ſend her name, ſhe replied, with ſome he- ſitation, that it was now La Motte; but the lady could only recollect her by that of Nanette. A thou- ſand ſad ideas at this inſtant ruſhed into Madame de St. Aubin's mind, and recalled paſt ſcenes of miſery; but the hopes of making ſome intereſting diſcovery rendered her eager to admit her former domeſtic. She entreated Monſieur de Senan- ges to be preſent at the interview, and ordered her to appear.—Pale and trembling Nanette obeyed the ſummons, throwing herſelf at the

feet

feet of Madame de St. Aubin, who mildly requested her to rise. The poor creature, casting her eyes fearfully around, and perceiving the Count, rose precipitately, and returned to the door—" Ah !" cried she, " if that is the Viscount de " St. Aubin, indeed I cannot face " him !"—" It is not, upon my " honour," replied Madame de St. Aubin ; " it is the Count de Se- " nanges ; in whom I have so un- " reserved a confidence, that he " is entitled to be witness of every " circumstance relative to my fa- " mily. Reassure yourself, my " good Nanette, and rest satisfied " that, whatever discovery you may " be encouraged to make, no ad-

" vantage

" vantage whatever ſhall be taken " againſt you : rely on my ſacred " promiſe to reward and not to " puniſh you." — " Ah!" replied the weeping creature, " you were " always too good, too kind to me, " unworthy as I was! — But in- " deed, indeed I had no bad inten- " tion, and only did as I was bid.

" Well, Nanette," replied the lady, " I heartily forgive you; " and only require you to make " a reparation for any injury you " may unintentionally have done " me, by now diſcloſing every " event concerning me and mine " in which you have been engaged, " or thoſe under whoſe influence " you were compelled to act."

The Count, obſerving her ſpirits almoſt exhauſted by the violence of her agitation, humanely placed a chair for her, and ordered ſome wine to be preſented, which revived her ſpirits ſufficiently to proceed as follows:

"When my mother and I, Ma-
"dam, were appointed to ſerve
"you at Belle-vue, Mademoiſelle
"de St. Aubin, by conſiderable
"preſents and promiſes, ſecured us
"to her intereſt; and we received
"her commands only to obey
"yours, as far as was conſiſtent
"with her pleaſure:—ſhe repre-
"ſented you to us as an ignomi-
"nious connexion to her brother's
"illuſtrious family; and the Viſ-

"count's

" count's resentment confirming,
" in our opinion, this circum-
" stance, we imprudently imagined
" our submission to her was an act
" of duty.—My father, indeed,
" judged otherwise:—he said you
" were a sweet lady, and was
" ever extolling your beauty and
" condescension.—You may recol-
" lect, towards the time of your
" confinement, that my mother one
" day asked permission to visit a sick
" relation; you, Madam, kindly
" spared her, little imagining that
" her summons to Paris so nearly
" concerned yourself.—Mademoi-
" selle de St. Aubin having pri-
" vately sent for her, first bribing
" her to secresy by a considerable
 " gratuity,

" gratuity, extorted from her a
" solemn, yet reluctant promise;
" that, if you had a son, we should
" assure you that it died soon after
" its birth, and expose the infant,
" in a basket, on the public road;
" where it was beyond a doubt
" but that some humane passenger
" would compassionately receive
" and nourish it.

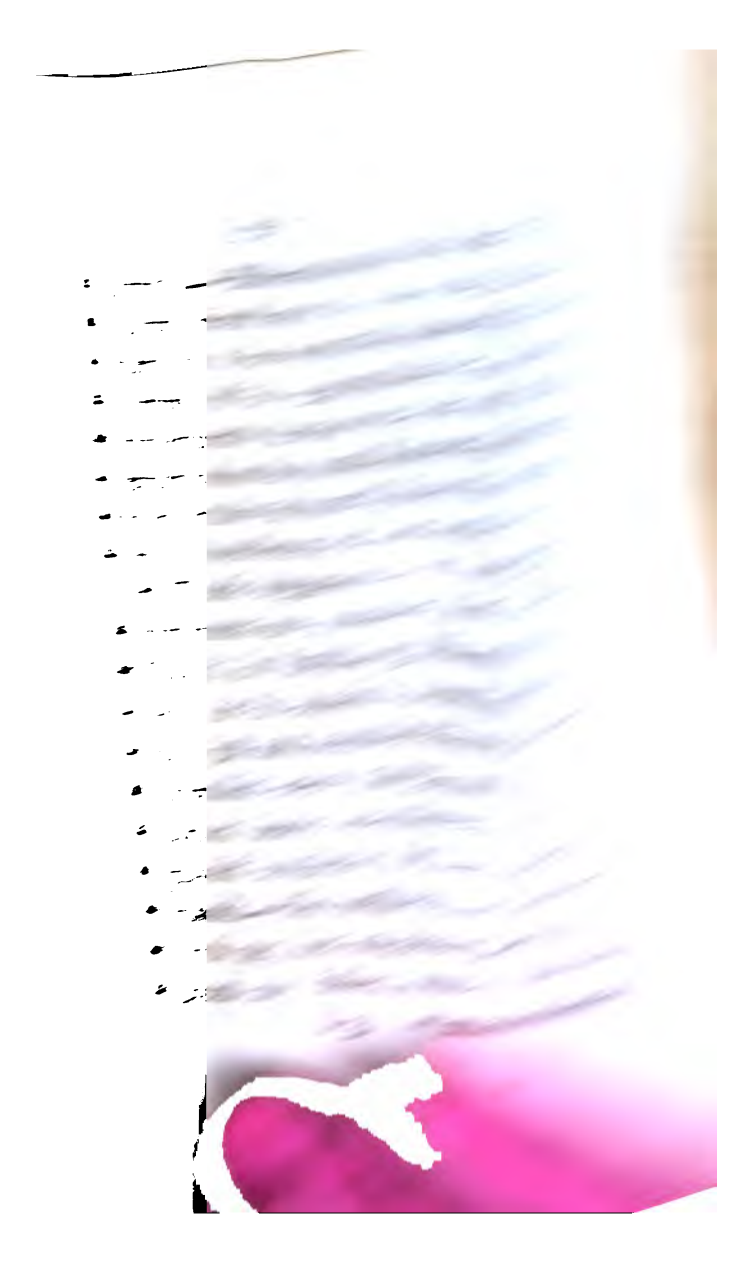
" Barbarous woman! — How
" could a heart so hard expect a
" stranger to undertake a charge
" she cruelly renounced!—My mo-
" ther at first started with horror at
" the proposal! — but threats ope-
" rated more strongly upon her
" fears than promises had upon
" her hopes, and overcame every
" scruple.

" female.—M[illegible]
" A[illegible] [illegible]
" the that [illegible]
" fortune of [illegible]
" confidence [illegible]
" expectation [illegible]
" the [illegible]
" the [illegible]
" That [illegible]
" commit [illegible]
" should [illegible]
" felt [illegible]
" [illegible]
" promise [illegible]
" turned [illegible]
" guarded [illegible]
" man—[illegible]
" with [illegible]
" from [illegible]

" gratuity, extorted from her a
" solemn, yet reluctant promise;
" that, if you had a son, we should
" assure you that it died soon after
" its birth, and expose the infant,
" in a basket, on the public road;
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" Barbarous woman! — How
" could a heart so hard expect a
" stranger to undertake a charge
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" ther at first started with horror at
" the proposal! — but threats ope-
" rated more strongly upon her
" fears than promises had upon
" her hopes, and overcame every

" scruple.



"attachment to your service she "well knew would prevent and "betray the scheme.

"When you were taken ill we "had the precaution to send him "on an errand to Paris, which "would detain him a day and a "night; and it was in that fatal "expedition he had the misfortune "to dislocate his leg; which, by "bringing on a slow fever, ter- "minated his life in a few weeks!

"As soon as your son was born, "we took advantage of your in- "sensibility to remove it to the "most distant quarter of the house. "—I accepted the charge of "nursing it till it could, with "more safety, be disposed of, ac-

"cording

" cording to the cruel commands of " his unnatural aunt.—Its beauty " and innocence a thousand times " tempted me to betray my trust, " and the confidence placed in " me:—but my mother carefully " watched over my motions; and, " indeed, I had no other method " to provide for its protection, " without risking the discovery of " Mademoiselle de St. Aubin, and " thereby incurring her certain ven- " geance, both upon the unfortu- " nate victim of her malice and " myself.

" When my mother judged it " might, without danger, be ex- " posed to the charitable chance to " which it was destined, she or-

" dered me to drefs it plainly; and " as your recovery was yet too du- " bious for her to quit you with " propriety, fhe affigned to me the " painful office of placing the dear " infant where it could not be over- " looked, and then deferting it:— " but, fhrinking with horror at " fuch a thought, I determined " not to return home till I had feen " it in fafe hands, whatever might " be the confequence.—Inftead of " dreffing it as fhe commanded, I " chofe its richeft robe, and a cap " trimmed with the fineft lace:—I " encircled its waift likewife with a " ribband, to which hung a gold " coral, which I had found amongft " its clothes; flattering myfelf that

" these evident tokens of distinc-
" tion might prove a benefit, and
" ensure its helpless innocence a
" kind protector.

" I tenderly kissed the little angel
" after it was dressed, and invoked
" heaven to preserve it.—I then
" fed it plentifully with milk and
" bread; and, lulling it into a
" deep slumber, hastened out of
" the house, lest my mother should
" make her appearance, and disco-
" ver its ornaments.

" Reaching the road that led to
" Paris, I was very soon delivered
" from my precious charge: the
" sound of a carriage, and the
" distant view of a large retinue,
" determined me now to try the
" fate

" fate of my little nurfling. — I
" placed it by the fide of a hedge,
" and, concealing myfelf behind,
" waited the event. — The noife of
" the wheels and horfes difturbed
" the repofe of the affrighted babe!
" — its cries caught the attention
" of the firft fervant who reached
" the fpot: he difmounted, — and,
" lifting up the bafket, gazed at
" the child with vifible furprife. —
" Its pretty hands extended, feem-
" ed to implore the protection its
" innocence demanded. — By this
" time the equipage drove up, — a
" handfome gentleman was feated
" in it: — he ordered the coachman
" to ftop; and, calling to the fer-
" vant who ftill held the bafket,
" he

" he took the infant in his arms;
" and seemed to smile on it with
" pleasure and compassion.

" Though I could not hear dis-
" tinctly what was said, I disco-
" vered that the babe was fortu-
" nately disposed of, and saw it
" received into the carriage, which
" drove rapidly from my sight.
" I made the best of my way home,
" transported with my success: —
" my mother was satisfied with my
" report, and applauded my dili-
" gence.—We both agreed in the
" opinion, that, the better to pre-
" vent your mistrust of the child's
" death, (which nothing but our
" own conscious deception could
" suppose) we should construct an

" artificial

" artificial grave. Fortunately we " put the plan in execution, as you " were no fooner recovered than " you perfifted in your demand of " being conducted to it.

" You, Madam, never fufpected " the impofition, but mourned the " death of a living infant, whom " Providence meant one day to re- " ftore to your arms!—Thus, my " honoured miftrefs, have I at " length difcharged my confcience, " and confeffed how far I have been " guilty of the theft committed.— " Never have I enjoyed a mo- " ment's real undifturbed repofe " fince that period.—My mother " furvived my father but two years. " —Madame de St. Aubin, to re-

" ward

" ward me, as ſhe ſaid, for my
" diligent and faithful ſervices, but
" rather, I believe, to retain me
" ſecurely in her intereſt, portioned
" and married me to her ſteward.—
" I have been the mother of ſeven
" children, but have had the mi-
" ſery to loſe them all!—A ſevere
" judgment from that heaven I
" offended in bereaving you of
" yours!—It is only within three
" days that I have learnt the won-
" derful diſcovery made in your
" family!—My joy, at the happy
" iſſue of an event which I
" have ſo long ſo truly deplored
" and repented of, had nearly
" killed me—I confeſſed my guilt
" to my aſtoniſhed huſband—he
" propoſed

"proposed to wait upon you with "my deposition;—but I could not "resist the strong inclination I felt "to acknowledge, at your injured "feet, the part I acted in this myst-"terious affair.—Mademoiselle de "St. Aubin is, I believe, no longer "ignorant of your wonderful re-"union with your son:—she has "commanded my attendance at "the convent whither she is re-"tired; but I was determined to "make these discoveries to you "before I encountered her pre-"sence, that I might inform her "of the irrevocable confession I "had made."

Madame de St. Aubin, who had shed some tender tears during her

recital, to the memory of past interesting events, instead of reproaching Nanette for the part she had acted, generously assured her she regarded her as the preserver of her son, and felt herself under the strongest obligations for the precautions she had taken for his safety in the action she was forced to commit: more particularly she expressed her gratitude for her having distinguished her son by the coral, without which the authenticity of his birth would have been confirmed with difficulty.

Madame de St. Aubin added that the discovery Nanette had made should never injure herself or her family, since she would make such

ſuch proviſion for them as would amply recompenſe any loſs ſhe might ſuſtain from the reſentment of her patroneſs. She promiſed likewiſe to introduce her to her ſon, who, ſhe was certain, would not be ungrateful to his nurſe.

Madame de St. Aubin, accompanied by the Count, repaired, after her departure, to the Baron de Neuville, to conſult with him and Auguſtus upon the beſt method to purſue with his cruel aunt; but a letter, which was delivered to his aſtoniſhed mother, ſoon convinced them that they had no difficulties to apprehend from a dying penitent.—It contained the following lines: —

"Though the name of Amelia "de St. Aubin muſt be hateful to "the remembrance of the ſiſter "ſhe has wronged, ſhe ſtill hopes "for pardon from the widow of "her unfortunate brother. Stretch-"ed on the bed of ſickneſs, and "hovering on the brink of the "grave, ſhe implores to be ho-"noured with the preſence of "Madame de St. Aubin, only "to reſtore, through her hands, "that inheritance to an injured "nephew of which her crimes "have too long deprived him."

Madame de St. Aubin melted into tears. — "Alas!" ſaid ſhe, "unfortunate Amelia! may "heaven forgive as readily as

"I do.—The justice of Providence "repays our wrongs: till I had "recovered the blessing I had lost "so long, my heart never mur- "mured at the deprivation of for- "tune. I alone reproached thee "for the estranged affections of a "husband, and that fatal death "which was its early consequence." Madame de St. Aubin was too strongly affected, and felt too great an agitation, to write a reply—but, admitting the steward into her presence, who was the bearer of Amelia's letter, she charged him to assure his mistress that she would attend her the next day, and hoped to find her mended in her health, and tranquil in her spirits.

She

She would have gone alone to pay the mournful visit, but her son, and the Count de Senanges, insisted upon accompanying her, promising that they would not attempt to discompose the dying lady by forcing themselves into her presence. Early in the morning they set out, and reached the convent about noon. They were shewn into the parlour; and one of the nuns, making her appearance at the grate, admitted Madame de St. Aubin, who inquired anxiously after Amelia.—She shook her head —"Ah truly, by St. Mary, ill "enough," replied she; "but we "hope much from your presence. "The whole night she raved of

"you; and declares her ſoul will
"be eternally loſt if ſhe lives not
"to receive your pardon.—Then
"ſhe talked about an infant and a
"murdered brother." — "Poor
"Amelia," interrupted Madame
de St. Aubin, ſtrongly touched by
this account, "thank heaven thou
"haſt no crimes of ſuch a nature
"to repent of: abſolute guilt is a
"ſtranger to thy boſom. But come,
"dear ſiſter," (to the nun) "ſhall
"I not be conducted to the cham-
"ber of this poor ſufferer!" St.
Agnes bowed in ſilence, and led
the way.—The door of the apart-
ment was gently opened — St. Ag-
nes advanced to the bed, and whiſ-
pered; — a weak voice replied,—

"Ah,

" Ah, my God! now is my firſt
" dreadful trial! how ſhall I ſup-
" port her injured face:—alas! ſhe
" was once my friend!"—" And is
" ſo ſtill," cried Madame de St.
Aubin; " witneſs theſe unfeigned
" tears—witneſs my bleeding heart!
" —Look up, Amelia! view thy
" Adelaide!"— As ſhe drew near
enough to diſcover the emaciated
form which reſted on the bed, ſhe
ſtarted back with horror — diſeaſe
ſeemed to have added to her age
at leaſt twenty years!—Her dimi-
niſhed eyes were almoſt buried in
their hollow ſockets; and the ſhrunk
ſkin ſcarce covered the ſtarting
bones. It is true, Madame de St.
Aubin expected not to find the

vivid bloom which once adorned her cheek — she only thought to find the vestiges of beauty; but not a trace survived to tell the tale of former youth. Amelia perceived the emotions of surprise and horror: "Generous Adelaide!" she faintly uttered; "you should have been "prepared for the miserable spec-"tacle which shocks your gentle "spirits. Mark, in the state to "which I am reduced, the dire "effects of complicated guilt! "Conscience — that judge which "never long can sleep — aiding the "ravage of consuming sickness, "has changed me to what you "now behold! while time restores "you to my remembrance, with

"every

"every recollected feature: innocence has preserved the relics of a countenance, which neither the trials of adversity nor slow advances of age have yet materially impaired.—That smile of sweet benevolence which graced your blooming youth still dwells upon your looks, and generously proclaims my pardon.—Instead of the just reproaches I have merited, like a kind angel, you bring comfort to my departing soul!—Yes, comfort and pity to the wretch who, violating every sacred tie of honour and of kindred, pursued your patient virtues with unnumbered wrongs."—"Talk not of wrongs, my dear

"Amelia," interrupted her sister, "my presence would be a barbarous insult, did I not come solely "to assure you of my warmest "friendship."—"Ah," cried the sick penitent, "wound not my "heart with that profaned expression! your friendship having so "cruelly betrayed, I never can deserve—but your forgiveness my "repentance claims; and I thank "that all-merciful Being, before "whom I shortly must appear, that "my contrition is sincere and fervent! Behold the sole remaining method in my power to become just to that dear son, whom "my guilt has hitherto deprived "of his inheritance," presenting a sealed

ſealed packet to Madame de St. Aubin, ſhe thus in broken ſentences continued — "The wealth "a father left, as he believed, to "the laſt ſurviving heir, is here "bequeathed to him, or rather is "reſigned; ſince, were it poſſible "for me to live, I have left my-"ſelf dependent on his mercy, and "ſhould become the wretched ob-"ject of his charity, diſpoſſeſſed "of my own fortune, as well as of "thoſe immenſe poſſeſſions, I have "too long uſurped. My heart "yearns with tenderneſs for the "much-wronged youth. — Oh, "plead my pardon with this belov-"ed ſon! Could I have dared to "hope he would commiſerate ſuch

"a wretch,

"a wretch, I would have entreated
"a condescending visit: to have
"traced in him the features of an
"unfortunate brother would have
"soothed the horrors of approach-
"ing death, and yielded a painful
"satisfaction to this repentant
"heart." — "Then," exclaimed
Madame de St. Aubin, "those
"wishes are within your reach; he
"is actually here, and only waits
"permission to attend you." —
"Excellent young man!" replied
Amelia, "the goodness of his
"heart, in accompanying you to
"the abode of his greatest enemy,
"assures me of his forgiveness:
"entreat for me his presence, and
"let me indulge my eyes before

"they

ftey close for ever with a bro-
her's dear surviving image."—
dame de St. Aubin descended
tily to fetch her son, prepared
n for the pity-moving spectacle;
d introduced him to his dying
nt. — Amelia had requested to be
sed, and supported by her pil-
ws: strong agitations convulsed
r frame; and, for a few moments,
e was deprived of the power of
terance. An interval of calm suc-
eeded — she extended her emaci-
ted arms.—Augustus, who under-
ood the sign, suffered her to
mbrace him; the drops of soft
umanity, wrung from his feeling
eart, fell upon her cheek. A
ghostly smile illumed her haggard
eyes

eyes—she loosed her feeble hold—she cast a grateful look to heaven—faintly articulated "I am forgiven, "—I am happy!"—and, sinking on her pillow, instantly expired.

A scene so mournful, and a death so sudden, awfully affected Monsieur and Madame de St. Aubin. Augustus supported his trembling mother, and hurried her from the breathless corse of Amelia. The Count de Senanges felt no less shocked at an event, little expected to take place so soon. The nuns crowded about Madame de St. Aubin, offering her many officious consolations:—the abbess sent her a complimental message, but was herself too much indisposed to admit

mit an interview. At length, being tolerably recovered, ſhe was attended to the carriage by her two companions, and ſet out on her return to Paris.—The ſpirits of this amiable woman had been ſo much affected by the penitence and death of a ſiſter, for whom ſhe once felt the tendereſt friendſhip, that ſhe was ſome time confined to her chamber. There ſhe ſhed freſh tears to the renewed remembrance of her beloved huſband, whoſe injurious conduct never could eraſe him from her affections. During this interval, the ſteward of the late Viſcount attended his new lord, who was ſoon fixed in the ſecure poſſeſſion of the inheritance of his ancestors

ancestors: but he was dead to every pleasure fortune could bestow; and sighed in the lap of affluence his disappointed love. Deeply, however, as he was sensible of the incurable wound, which, with a slow and baneful poison, undermined his happiness, yet he was true to the sacred ties of honour, and neglected no attentions to a wife who treated him with the coldest indifference and ingratitude. Neither parental authority, nor conjugal affection, could recall the deluded Leonora from the fatal paths of dissipation.—She was still the inseparable companion of Madame de Soissons.—Play consumed their successive nights, and their days

were

ere spent in that disturbed repose which is ever the attendant of late hours, and an incessant round of vanity. But too soon remorseless fate snatched from the world, in her full career of gaiety, this fair votary of pleasure!

YOUTH, BEAUTY, WEALTH, and GREATNESS, all availed not, to rescue from the grave the lovely victim! Madame de St. Aubin was seized with a malady, which put an early period to her life! the ninth day, after being attacked with a virulent small-pox, closed in eternal sleep those radiant eyes which had obtained unnumbered conquests. In her intervals of reason the suffering of her body worked

worked the most happy reformation in her mind: they dispelled from her ideas the temptations of a sublunary state—recalled the dormant virtues of her soul, and prepared it for the awful change she was about to make! The solemn crisis of impending death placed in a far different light those deceptions of vanity and transitory pleasures which had intoxicated her young heart. — The world receded from her view, and she seemed to regret life only as its short remains allowed not sufficient space for her contrition. The ardour of her devotion was exemplary; and her resignation to her fate, from a firm reliance on the mercies of her God;

truly

y affecting!—She took a tender
ewell of her surrounding friends;
reated they would not mourn
loss; but expressed her wishes
it, while they generously par-
ned all her errors, they rather
ould rejoice at her removal from
world whose allurements had es-
anged her heart from those en-
earing duties and connexions she
id so ill requited:—the names of
er husband and her father were
le last intelligible words she arti-
ulated, and Augustus received
om her expiring eye the last ray
f departing reason.———

This amiable man, whose atten-
ions during her illness, and anxi-
ety for her recovery, could not

have been exceeded even towards the wife of his choice, was sensibly touched by her sudden fate! — With undissembled tears he mourned her death, and tenderly regretted her premature removal from a world to which she had been too fondly attached! —In contemplating the ghastly form, once glowing with animated beauty, how does the thinking mind moralize upon the vanity of short-lived pleasures! — The grief, the anguish, of the good old Baron, is not to be described:—that parent-heart alone can sympathize with such sensations which has experienced such a loss! — The revival of his daughter's virtues obliterated the impression of her

failings:—he remembered only
beauties of her form, the graces
her mind! — nor could all his
losophic resolution support, with
titude, this unexpected stroke of
tune! — He felt bereaved of
ery social joy, the promised
mfort of his drooping years! —
serted and forlorn! — Thus the
r blooming branches, cropped
om the venerable tree, leave its
oor trunk, unsheltered, to the
de elements and boisterous tem-
est!—Scarce could the gentle force
friendship drag this heart-stricken
arent from the deformed remains
f what was once his daughter!—
ixed like a statue, he gazed upon
er face! — then smote his aged

 breast,

breast, and, with a smile of anguish, thus exclaimed —

"Yes, all-gracious heaven! — it is past! — The only tie of nature, that remained to attach to life a poor old man, is now dissolved! — Life has no more a charm; nor death a pang, for me! — Oh, thou! who lately wert so fair, so sweet, so lovely! thou art fled for ever! — the ravages of sickness have defaced thy beauties, and left thee a spectacle of horror! — Oh, my child! my child! — I hoped in thee to have survived succeeding ages! — and to have transmitted to a blooming offspring my divided wealth! — Thou shouldest

"have

"have closed a father's eyes; but "he, unnatural doom! was destined to close thine!—Yet we "shall meet again! — and Heaven, "in snatching thee so early, has "shortened our term of separation.

"Yes, beauteous seraph! thou "art only gone before to smooth "the rugged path of death, and "be my gentle herald to a world "where we shall unite to part no "more!"—Thus did the afflicted parent vent his soul's anguish; neither, when borne from this scene of desolation, did his piercing lamentation cease:—still he addressed the invisible object of his sorrows, till, overwhelmed with grief, he sunk into a silent stupor.

The Marchioneſs de Soiſſons, who had ſo frequently experienced the ſtrong force of Madame de St. Aubin's attachment, now proved the fickleneſs of her own friendſhip, and the inſenſibility of her heart. Though ſhe had long paſſed the dangerous diſorder that had been ſo fatal to the poor Viſcounteſs, ſhe did not once attempt a perſonal inquiry or friendly viſit.— Sickneſs and mortality were ſubjects too ſerious for her reflections. Devoid of every tender ſentiment which melts to ſympathy the feeling mind — a friend expiring was to her a friend no more!—Even when informed of Madame de St. Aubin's death at the card-table, ſhe received

the account with savage unconcern, and indifferently said; "It is fortunate she did not survive her boasted beauty; to live, and be a fright, is still more horrible than death itself!"—On this unworthy woman had the ill-fated Leonora lavished all her hours; and, for her sake, estranged herself from real friendship.

With what different sentiments were Julia, Henrietta, and Madame de St. Aubin, inspired!—Totally as Leonora had neglected them since her introduction to that bane of her happiness, yet their affection for her was undiminished; her danger awakened all their former partiality — they proved the

tenderest nurses in her fatal illness, and scarcely ever quitted her apartment till the last sigh of expiring life sadly proclaimed their gentle offices no longer necessary!—The feeling heart of Julia had watched, with attentive tenderness, the progress and every turn of this fatal distemper; and, touched most sensibly at Leonora's fate, she mourned her rival's death with all the energy of friendship.

Scarce were Madame de St. Aubin's eyes closed for ever, ere she felt the propriety of removing from a mansion where the newly-acquired freedom of a lover might expose her to a renewal of those attentions which delicacy and prudence disallowed

allowed at this juncture as forcibly as ever.—She would not trust herself to behold the first emotions of that regret she knew the generous heart of Augustus must experience when he was convinced that hope was fled, and his unfortunate wife no more!—She left him to the consolation of his surrounding friends; and, in the midst of the general grief and consternation, passed unobserved to the carriage that waited for her; and returned home to indulge, in solitude, those tears which were due to the memory of a departed friend!—When the remaining mourners were collected around the afflicted husband and distracted father, the eyes of the former

vainly

vainly and involuntarily fought for that dear object, whofe influence alone could footh a diftrefs which derived its fource rather from fympathetic pity than affection. Senfible of the cold indifference with which he had been long regarded by his mifguided wife, he had not the aggravation of accufing confcience to enhance his forrow — his regret was unattended by the fting of remorfe — he fighed the untimely fate of youth and beauty — he wept her fufferings — but the reftoration of his liberty fhed an imperceptible fweetnefs over his grief, which rendered it fupportable. — Julia was abfent; but her loved idea mingled with that of the breathlefs Leonora;

nora;—he judged the delicate motive of her departure, and approved the conduct that mortified his wishes. — To the heart-struck father this amiable son now turned all his attention — he approached the venerable mourner — for some moments silence prevailed — grief melted in the eloquent eyes of Augustus — the Baron pressed him in his arms! — "Ah!" cried he, in a tremulous voice, "did I presume "to accuse Omnipotence of being "totally bereft! — Ungrateful parent!—thou hast still a child!— "dear relict of my Leonora! — "come to my heart, and share it "with her memory!"

It was recommended to Monsieur de St. Aubin, by his friends, to remove the Baron, as soon as possible, from a habitation which daily renewed and fed his anguish. The hotel of the late Viscount was now ready to receive him; yet it was not without difficulty Monsieur de Neuville could be persuaded to change his abode.—Julia observed a strict retirement at home, and never saw Augustus but at the house of her brother: and there she studiously avoided every opportunity of finding herself an instant alone with him: — her penetrating lover observed and secretly reproached her cruelty:—his passion, no longer restrained by the ties of duty, was determined.

determined to surmount every perplexing obstacle of feminine decorum; resolving, in defiance of its rigid dictates, to assert his former claims, and plead the cause of love.

One day, when all, excepting the Marchioness, were assembled at the Viscount's, he stole unperceived away, and flew to the Hotel de Senanges, informing the porter he had brought a message to Madame de Soissons — he waited not to be announced, but hastily ascended the staircase: he traversed the gallery that led to her dressing-room; and, when he reached the antichamber, he stopped for a few moments, to recover from the perturbation of his spirits, before he could assume

courage

courage to appear in the dreaded pre-fence of his Julia: he ftood irrefolute whether to advance or to retreat.—Hope at length prevailed over his timidity, and he gently tapped at the door: — a filver voice fweetly commanded him to enter; — with trembling emotion he turned the obedient lock — the fpring flew open at his touch, and difcovered the object of his adoration employed in fhading fome beautiful embroidery. The needle dropped from her fair fingers — fhe ftarted up—her cheek was overfpread with fudden blufhes!—Surprife and dif-pleafure animated her countenance, and perplexed her bofom: in an inftant Auguftus was at her feet —

"Forgive,

" Forgive, my adorable Julia," he cried, " the presumption of a man " who cannot exist without be- " holding you!" — " And is it " thus," interrupted the Marchioness haughtily, " my privacy is to be " interrupted?—what privilege en- " titles the Viscount de St. Aubin " to invade a solitude which is my " choice, and should be sacred?"— " The privilege of truth and love!" replied he. — " Nay, frown not, " loveliest of women! — obscure " not the heavenly beauties of that " brow by killing scorn! — but " listen, with gracious pity, to a " suit which claims at least the at- " tention of my Julia—alone con- " sent to hear me—and I will obey

" your

"your cruel doom, and instantly
"retire, if you command it!"—
She was distressed—a look of irresolute tenderness and sorrow encouraged him to proceed—"Ah! can
"those sentiments with which I
"once was honoured be effaced?—
"Is there no pleader in a heart
"which was acknowledged mine
"by every tie of sympathy?—No
"longer can you coldly urge the
"claims of duty—implicitly have
"we both obeyed its tyrant dictates—they are now dissolved—
"restored to mutual freedom, our
"plighted hands are free to form
"the union which fate has hitherto so cruelly obstructed.—
"Ah, Julia!—thou art silent!—
"thy

" thy averted eyes, and that fore-
" boding figh, plant daggers in
" my breaft!—It is paft!—I am
" forgotten!—thy faithlefs heart,
" and thy perfidious hand, re-
" nounce me!—Inconftant Julia—
" wretched—wronged Auguftus!"

"Ah, barbarous man!" uttered the Marchionefs, burfting into tears—"how have I merited thefe
" reproaches?—My heart, incapa-
" ble of change, refufed its ten-
" dereft affections to a hufband
" worthy of them; fubftituting
" cold gratitude in return for
" generous love: and, ere the
" mournful tributes due to his
" honoured memory are paid, my
" ears are wounded with unhal-

" lowed paſſion, and the ill-timed " upbraiding of an ungrateful " lover!—Ah, Auguſtus! where is " that ſenſibility, where that deli- " cacy of ſentiment, which firſt " impreſſed the heart of Julia?— " Scarce is thy Leonora cold in " earth, ere thou haſt ſuffered thy " newly abſolved vows to breathe " their falſehood in a widowed " ear!"—She moved with emotion to the window; he ſtill continued on his knees, and thus addreſſed her—" Hear me, thou ſoul of all " my hopes and wiſhes!—Pardon " the mad preſumption of a lover " urged by the frenzy of deſpairing " paſſion!—Never will I profane " again thy charming conſtancy

"by one reproach.—Oh, pity and "forgive a wretch, who long has "been the ſport of fortune. Torn "from my arms, even when trea- "cherous fate ſeemed ready to "unite us, I dread a ſecond ſe- "paration!— Shunned by the ob- "ject whom my heart adores, pro- "phetic fears have agonized my "mind!—but I ſhould have known "the ſoul of Julia incapable of "perfidy!—Come then, inſpiring "hope, ſoft peace, and animating "joy!—ſweet ſoothers of the "pangs of timid love!—Far be "the preſumption from me to re- "queſt thy hand, till thou haſt "ſacrificed to cuſtomary forms the "ſtated time!—Sacred to the me-

"mory of that exalted man, by "every due respect! But ah, my "Julia! can the most rigid virtue "deny one gracious smile — one "blest assurance that I yet am dear "to her who reigns triumphant in "my faithfnl breast?" ——

She turned to him;—a look of ineffable sweetness arrayed her countenance, a beam of radiance brightened her tear-full eye. — Extending her hand with an inexpressible grace, which diminished not that modest dignity inseparable from all her actions — "Receive once more," said she, "most amiable of men, the faithful vows of Julia: — they are "thine by merit and by right.—

"I disclaim

" I diſclaim deceit and affectation, " as arts unworthy of us both.— " When, therefore, theſe ſable en- " ſigns of unfeigned regret ſhall " have fulfilled their tributary teſ- " timonies of gratitude to the re- " membrance of a huſband, no " longer will I oppoſe the ſuit of " conſtancy and love." — The tranſported Auguſtus received with rapture ſo charming a confeſſion: " Propitious ſounds," he cried, " of promiſed bliſs! Oh, happieſt " moment of relenting fate! never " till now did my adoring heart " a joy experience unallayed by " pain.—Thou art then mine—ec- " ſtatic thought!—by vows irrevo- " cably breathed from thine own

"generous, all-persuasive lips; and "pitying Heaven permits and ratifies the promised union, so long, "so cruelly protracted!"—Glowing with soft confusion, Julia beheld the transports of Augustus; and, gently checking them by an awful beam from her expressive eye, she, with her wonted delicacy, requested him to quit her, and to conform to her irrevocable law, which permitted her not to receive his private visits. He promised perfect submission to her commands; and, satisfied with her generous avowal, he reluctantly withdrew, and returned to his hotel before he had been missed by the family party he had left.

When

When the Marchioneſs found herſelf alone, ſhe fell into the moſt pleaſing train of reflections ſhe had been capable of indulging ſince ſhe had compelled herſelf to act in obedience to a father.—She had at once the ſweet conſciouſneſs of having ſupported a blameleſs conduct as a wife and daughter; and the delightful proſpect of rewarding a lover's conſtancy, by uniting herſelf to the early object of her affections.—She was agreeably abſorbed in the ſoothing indulgence of theſe ſweet ideas, when Madame de St. Aubin and her ſiſter returned home. An air of ſoft ſerenity overſpread her countenance, and

her eyes beamed with unufual animation.

"Your filent contemplations, "my dear Julia," faid the Countefs, "muft have been very pleaf-"ing; and if you would not chide "me for my obfervation" (with an arch fmile) "I could affirm that "there is a fympathy between the "fouls of abfent lovers. Auguftus "has at this moment an expreffion "in his looks which befpeaks a "heart at eafe:—the gloom of in-"quietude has forfaken his brow, "and on your's I trace no longer "penfive fadnefs:—fome magic "fpirit has infpired you both." Julia's cheek was tinged with con-

fcious blushes —" Ah," cried ſhe, in an embarraſſed accent, "Auguſ-
" tus has betrayed me — ſuch are
" the arts of falſe diſſembling man!
" — give but a lover hope, and
" caution is no more. He intruded
" into my preſence—upbraided me
" with cruelty—ſighed—entreated,
" wept,—by the ſoft wiles of pity-
" moving love melted my eaſy
" heart to weakneſs: and, when
" compaſſionating his ſufferings I
" deigned to promiſe him my
" plighted hand, as the juſt recom-
" penſe of long-tried faith, he diſ-
" honourably boaſts in my extorted
" vows the triumph he has gained:
" — but he ſhall feel the force of
" my revenge." — Half ſerious,
half

half ſmiling, ſhe concluded theſe words, the Counteſs looking ſignificantly at Madame de St. Aubin, "Ah, Madam," ſaid ſhe, "have "we not made an intereſting diſ-"covery? — No, my charming "ſiſter, you are your own betrayer; "Auguſtus kept to himſelf his "hoarded joy, nor profaned the "ſacred confidence you had re-"poſed in him." — The confuſion of the Marchioneſs prevented her replying to the raillery of her delighted ſiſter. The Count de Senanges, upon his entrance, was ſoon made acquainted with the ſubject of their converſation, and the little incident which had occaſioned it. He told the Marchioneſs that ſhe had

had facrificed her fentiments too long to a decorum, which even the exalted delicacy of *her* character did not require, as her former engagements with his friend might have claimed an earlier confeffion of her unfhaken faith to fo amiable, fo conftant a lover. Julia fuffered herfelf to be convinced by thefe perfuafive arguments; and permitted her Auguftus to indulge with lefs reftraint the flattering hopes of his approaching happinefs. Some months elapfed in this fituation; and the period of the lovely widow's mourning drew near. The enraptured St. Aubin beheld its advance with all the enthufiafm of love: Monfieur de

Neuville,

Neuville, who felt for him the tendereft affection, began to wifh that he might fee this amiable fon happily engaged in a fecond union, before he himfelf was fummoned to pay the expected debt of Nature. Auguftus had long meditated an avowal of his former paffion for the Marchionefs; yet the delicacy of his regard to the memory of Leonora conftantly oppofed the difclofure of his fentiments to her refpected father. Monfieur de Senanges would have undertaken the friendly office of divulging a circumftance that could not but be painfully repugnant to the fenfibility of the Vifcount; but he confidered it as abfolutely incumbent

on

on his honour to unfold himſelf the confidential ſecret. Week after week elapſed before he could aſſume reſolution to introduce a ſubject which muſt renew the ſad remembrance of Leonora's fate; but an opportunity at length offered itſelf for this deſired yet dreaded ecclairciſſement. The Baron was one day gratefully acknowledging the attentions of Monſieur de St. Aubin—"I feel for you, Auguſtus," ſaid the good old man, "the ſame "degree of parental regard as if "Nature had formed you mine:— "equally intereſted in your hap- "pineſs, as if I could claim the "honour of your birth, it is the "deareſt object of my heart to ſee "you

" ſenſible of ſuch attractions to " offer her your hand and heart?" " —Ah, Sir," replied the Viſcount, agitated with a variety of ſtrong emotions — " your tender intereſt " in my happineſs demands and " merits all my confidence!—My " heart is opening to your view; " and the impartial confeſſion I " am going to make will ſoon con- " vince you how little difficulty " will be found in my compliance." He then in few words related to the Baron the commencement, progreſs, and diſappointment, of his paſſion for the Marchioneſs. The amiable father applauded his ingenuity, and aſſured him that his

his merit's were, if poſſible, greatly raiſed in his opinion from the tenderneſs he had ſhewn to Leonora, who he never ſuſpected had not been the firſt and *only* object of his choice.—He had indirectly heard the affections of Julia were engaged before her reluctant marriage with the Marquis, but had never arrived at the name of her acknowledged lover.

The Baron, delighting in the proſpect of ſeeing two ſuch matchleſs characters united, requeſted that he might be indulged with the diſtinction of preſenting the hand of the incomparable Julia to her beloved Auguſtus; which having done, he ſhould then ſink to that

"you united to a woman worthy
"of you : enough have you facri-
"ficed to the memory of my poor
"departed child ; — it pleafed
"Heaven to fnatch her from your
"arms, even in the dawn of mar-
"riage. — But for virtues fuch as
"your's Providence has ftill in ftore
"a fweet reward in fome fair part-
"ner of your cares.—Few indeed
"have merits equal to your own ;
"but, would you allow an old
"man's judgment, I could point
"out *one* lovely woman in whom
"is centered every feminine per-
"fection. — Julia de Soiffons has
"a form charming as beauty's
"felf, and a mind replete with
"every excellence. I have traced
"her

" her exalted conduct in the ſepa-
" rate characters of daughter,—
" wife,—and widow:—in the *firſt*
" I am not ignorant that ſhe ſacri-
" ficed the tendereſt attachment,
" in obedience to a father, who
" bluſhed not to unite her bloom
" with age. In the *ſecond* how
" conſpicuouſly ſhone her exem-
" plary conduct!—in the *laſt* how
" has ſhe, by the ſtrict retirement
" ſhe has obſerved, at a ſeaſon, and
" in a ſituation, ſo ſeducing to
" youth, rank, and beauty, proved
" the moſt delicate reſpect to the
" memory of her huſband!—You
" are worthy of each other. Speak,
" my Auguſtus, are you ſufficiently

" ſenſible

ERRATA IN VOL. II.

Page	Line	
38	1	*for* in different *read* indifferent.
50	11	*for* borne *read* born.
58	10	*for* confidante *read* confidant,
108	7	*for* inconftand *read* inconftant.
124	14	*for* dependent *read* dependant.
252	8	*for* preferred *read* prefered.
198	1	*infert* were *after* eyes.
204	12	*for* fhe *read* he.
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240	18	*omit the* e *in* immovable.
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